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The Shape of Things

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A MEETING IN BALTIMORE OF THE LEAGUE Against War and Fascism last Saturday was suddenly invaded by a black-shirted group of "American fascists" in full fascist regalia who proceeded to pay questionable tribute to the American flag by giving it Mussolini's salute. The incident was a trifle, but a trifle may be a portent. We agree with Congress that the Dickstein committee had a dangerous slant, and that an inquiry into "un-American" activities could be made so broad as to threaten legitimate liberal and labor groups. But this should not tie our hands in banning uniformed groups.

*

THE DECISIVE DEFEAT OF LEON DEGRELLE, leader of the Belgian Rexist Party, by Premier Paul van Zeeland may well mark the end of the present Belgian fascist movement. The results could scarcely have been more convincing. In an election forced upon the government by the Rexist leader, Degrelle obtained less than one-fifth of all the votes cast, and 4,400 fewer votes than were obtained by the Rexist candidate in the last election. The decisiveness of the verdict may be attributed primarily to popular-front tactics. The National Democratic Front, which was formed specifically to fight the election, was supported by all anti-fascist groups from the Catholics to the Communists and forced the Rexists into a hopelessly defensive position. It is significant to note that wherever a genuine united front has been formed, fascism has failed to score a victory.

*

HEYWOOD BROUN'S PAGE IN THIS ISSUE raises the whole question of the function of a liberal journal. Mr. Broun tells us that he is "getting a little sick of *The Nation's* policy of fair play." This is an amazing statement. We had assumed it was a passion for fair play that underlay his fight in behalf of the Newspaper Guild and his many other battles in the liberal cause. It is a strange and new theory that fair play should be required only of reactionary employers and not of us—or, for that matter, of him. We conceive of our task as a double one—on the one hand, to map out a clear and firm line of policy; on the other, in the phrase of Justice Holmes, never to forget that we are not God. Heywood Broun should know that *The Nation* has this task, just as he knows that it will not attempt to censor what he may choose to write on his own page.

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STANLEY BALDWIN, BY HIS DECISION NOT TO call Franco's bluff on the food blockade of Bilbao, has done his best to bring victory to the fascists. He has not only thereby abandoned the British principle of freedom of the seas; he has also set a precedent whereby Britain, so precariously dependent on outside sources for its food, may, in an emergency of its own like that of Bilbao, be subjected to similar treatment.

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THE 1937 STUDENT PEACE STRIKE PROMISES to be a far more impressive demonstration against war than any of those which have preceded it. Thirteen national organizations having student programs are cooperating as sponsors. Among them are groups as dissimilar as the National Council of Methodist Youth, the National Student Federation of America, the American Youth Congress, and the War Resisters' League. As might be expected with a cooperative undertaking of this kind, the program of the strike, as outlined in the call, leaves much to be desired. No recognition is taken of the basic issues presented by the Spanish conflict or of the necessity of building a political structure to enforce peace. Nevertheless, it is encouraging to notice that for the first time the strike is part of a long-range peace program primarily educational in character.

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HENRY FORD OF DETROIT AND PREMIER Mitchell Hepburn of Toronto are sitting, as we go to press, at the end of the same limb of an old-fashioned tree called the open shop. Mr. Lewis has already labeled as "quaint" Mr. Ford's idea that he will never recognize any union—and the Wagner Act decision makes the fall of Ford seem imminent. Since Premier Hepburn has the Canadian Mounted Police at his disposal he may be able to hold out a little longer in his gallant fight for General Motors of Canada, Ltd. He will not deal, he says, with "foreign agitators" from Detroit! The union maintains that the Detroit agreement to bargain collectively applies to all G. M. C. plants. In any case it can tolerate a cut-rate labor market in Canada only at the cost of undermining its hard-won victories in the United States. Hepburn, like Ford, must fall. The danger lies in his apparent determination to sacrifice workers' lives as well as their living standards in order to make Canada safe for that good old native-born industry, General Motors.

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ONCE MORE A PATERNALISTIC EMPLOYER HAS discovered that his workers are not entirely happy. The workers in the Hershey chocolate factory in the model Pennsylvania town of that name recently started a sitdown strike. A few days later they were forcibly thrown out by a crowd of 3,000 or 4,000 people sentimentally described as old-fashioned, outraged, patriotic Mennonite farmers who were angry because a newfangled sitdown strike had closed down their market for milk. The raid, which was bloody, was preceded by a mass-meeting, and the crowd dispersed at once after it had completed its work. What remains unexplained is the sudden solidarity among the stolid individualistic farm population, the lynching spirit that seized the peaceful town, and the extraordinary efficiency of the impromptu assault. There is evidence that the crowd was not limited to farmers, and that the attack came after the strikers had agreed to leave the plant; there is also evidence that the hall where the mass-meeting was held was well stocked with sticks and clubs. Incitement of farmers to attacks upon town workers is an old and dangerous device. If the outbreak in Hershey was a vigilante affair, those responsible for it are guilty of high crime. Meanwhile the strike has been settled by an agreement to hold an election under the Wagner Act.

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THE STOCK MARKET SUFFERED A NERVOUS collapse last week on a rumor that the dollar would be revalued upward in terms of gold. While the law would only permit the President to raise the gold value of the dollar from 59.04 to 60 per cent of its old value, the Secretary of the Treasury is allowed full freedom in fixing the buying rate of gold—which is really what determines the dollar's worth in terms of foreign currencies. Lowering the buying price of gold at this time would strike at the root of the inflationary danger. The problems inhering in eleven billion dollars of idle gold and more than a billion dollars in excess bank reserves have arisen because of the severity of the devaluation of the dollar. Economists are rather generally agreed that even now the dollar is still undervalued in terms of the world's currencies. The present high prices of copper, lead, zinc, and other metals are at least partly the result of the previously established, artificially high prices of gold and silver. While a sudden return to the pre-depression value of the dollar would precipitate a deflationary process comparable in degree to the inflationary boom of June-July, 1933, a small change, not greater than 5 per cent, would exercise a healthy corrective influence. Once such a change is made, it would be wise to make it clear that the period for tinkering with the exchange is past, and to arrange a permanent basis for international stabilization.

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WE FEEL HONORED AGAIN IN PUBLISHING in this issue Thomas Mann's article on the meaning of the struggle in Spain and his own stand with relation to it. It is the analysis of an artist who does not ordinarily think in political terms, but who has been forced by the compulsions of the age to take account of political realities and to reorient his thinking to them. Thomas Mann's growth into political consciousness since the triumph of Hitlerism will, we feel certain, go down as an important chapter in literary history. He is now in America for a brief visit. And it is characteristic of him that his purpose in coming should be to speak at the celebration of the fourth anniversary of the "University in Exile"—the graduate faculty of German and Italian émigrés founded by Alvin Johnson at the New School in New York City.

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PROPOSALS MADE AT THE WORLD TEXTILE Conference for a forty-hour week throughout the industry have met with firm opposition from the employers' delegates of Japan and England, the two chief exporting nations. They contend that as long as the United States and other countries maintain high tariff barriers, they must keep long hours in order to hold their markets. To this the American representatives have replied that the tariff barriers must be preserved in order to keep out the products of "sweated" labor. The reply is not, however, wholly convincing. The Japanese have a legitimate grievance when they point out that in addition to importing all of their raw materials they have to combat all manner of discrimination in the markets of the world, particularly in this country. As long as we maintain a holier-than-thou attitude, the basic problem will remain unsolved, and textile workers the world over will continue to be subjected to merciless exploitation. If an agreement on a short week is to be reached, the more favored countries must be prepared to make sweeping tariff concessions on a quid pro quo basis. As one of the serious offenders, the United States should lead the way.

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THE JENNINGS CASE, WHICH SMELLED SO strongly of frame-up that the district attorney refused to prosecute it, has again become Pennsylvania's *cause célèbre,* thanks to a curious decision by Judge Samuel E. Shull. Emerson Jennings, it will be recalled, was the printer for the rebel hard-coal union which has since made its peace with the United Mine Workers of America. He was also a thorn in the side of the coal barons and their friends of the public utilities; he printed the handbills and newspapers which attacked them, and he led the demand for the impeachment of Judge W. Alfred Valentine in the anthracite strike of 1935. During the strike Judge Valentine's car was blown up. Several months later Jennings was arrested, and after he had been denied trial for a year was finally found guilty. Meanwhile, however, as we pointed out in our issue of January 30, the entire case against him had collapsed, and the witnesses against him were under arrest for perjury. In spite of this, Judge Shull refused to grant a new trial to Jennings and sentenced him to a five-to-ten-year prison term. It is a sufficient commentary on the decision that the prosecution, as well as the defense, was amazed at Judge Shull's action. The case will of course be appealed.

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THE APPOINTMENT OF KARL LLEWELLYN TO the Industrial Advisory Board of New York City by Mayor LaGuardia is an excellent one. But our approval is tempered by the fact that it will deprive our readers of Professor Llewellyn's projected articles on Law and Sit-down which we had scheduled for publication beginning with this issue. The judicial character of the board makes it obviously inadvisable for a member of it publicly to express his opinion in advance on the issues that will come before him.

The Wagner Decisions

WHAT happened in the Wagner decisions was nothing short of a miracle. The trend of the court in the last two years had left little hope for so crucial a regulation of capitalist enterprise as the Wagner Act represents. The act was bitterly fought before its passage by big enterprise and its allies; it was systematically sabotaged after its passage in the name of the Higher Law of property rights and freedom of contract; the work of the Labor Board was obstructed at every step and its decisions jettisoned with an insolent indifference. And yet the court has now sustained the entire act. Given the split personality of the capitalist democratic state, the decisions are a triumph of democracy in its series of tilts with an irresponsible capitalism.

The cases fall into four groups. In the first is the motor-bus case, where the fact that the bus company was an instrument of interstate commerce was unchallenged, and where Justice Roberts wrote the unanimous opinion of the court: this decision occasioned no surprise. In the second is the Associated Press case. It was fought out not so much on the interstate-commerce issue, for it would have been fantastic to assert that news pays homage to state lines, but rather on the issue of freedom of press. The case was crucial, for without it the Newspaper Guild would collapse and the big newspaper owners become a law to themselves. In the third group is the Jones and Laughlin Steel case, where the major battle between the two camps within the court was fought. Chief Justice Hughes, speaking for the same majority of five as in the A. P. case, marshaled his best precedents and made this one of the key decisions of constitutional law for the future; Justice McReynolds, speaking for the same court minority, fought back stubbornly and—especially in the impromptu oral opinion which he has now made classically his own—bitterly. It is in this case that manufacturing was subjected to federal regulation; it is here that "the plainest facts of our national life" arranged themselves in a pattern of economic realism to confront reasoning "in an intellectual vacuum." In the fourth group are the Fruehauf Trailer case and the Friedman-Marks Clothing case, again five-to-four decisions; following the same reasoning as the Jones-Laughlin decision, these cases in a sense go even farther, for the firms involved here are relatively small, and their interstate character is not as immediately clear as the far-flung activities of a huge steel company, employing hundreds of thousands of men, drawing its raw material from the four corners of the nation, sending its products back to the same four corners, and dominating our prosperity and industrial peace.

In short, the victory of the federal government was as sweeping as anything in constitutional history since John Marshall's day. To write as he did, Chief Justice Hughes had to ignore the decision on the Guffey Act in the Carter Coal case and play ducks and drakes with his own opinion in the Schechter case. Leaping quite blithely over the last two years of judicial reasoning, he went back to the more liberal interstate-commerce reason-

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ing of the court in an earlier period—to Stafford *vs.* Wallace and Chicago Board of Trade *vs.* Olsen.

But while the victory of the federal power was expressed in legalistic terms through the traditional conceptual juggling and verbal mumbo-jumbo of the court, the dynamics of the victory were political and its substance was economic. Even his opponents must now credit Mr. Roosevelt with having been the immediate cause of the court's new liberalism. We may all recognize now the strategy involved in making his proposal *before* and not *after* the Wagner decisions. For it presented the court majority with the bitter alternative of upholding the Wagner Act or giving the final fillip needed for passing the reorganization measure. But even more important than the threat involved was the fact that the President's proposal stirred up a vast amount of discussion of the nature of the judicial process. The common man now sees more clearly than ever that the decisions of the court are decisions of *social policy.*

In one respect at least the effects of the decisions are clear. They will give an enormous impetus to the task of labor organization now being carried on primarily by the C. I. O.; they constitute the final validation of collective bargaining as a social reality, coming from the group that is always the last to recognize social realities; they furnish the effective answer to the primitivist bravado of Henry Ford. Undoubtedly they will spur also the movement for outlawing the sitdown, incorporating labor unions, and other repressive legislation. But the same labor strength and labor restraint which in the last analysis were responsible for these decisions should operate also to defeat counter-legislation.

The effects of the decisions on the President's court proposal are not so clear. By decreasing the bitterness against the court, they weaken the proposal; they have the same effect, moreover, by revealing that the court *is* responsive to popular opinion when expressed with sufficient force. Our own guess, however, is that these effects will be balanced by others. Once more it has become clear that our national destiny hangs on the slender thread of a single justice's vote. And once more it has become clear that the court is a political agency like any other in the government.

The Nation's concern has been a dual one. We have favored removing the obstructions which the court as constituted interposes to the important social legislation of today and the immediate future; we have favored also loosening the hold of the judicial power upon our social policy in general. From the beginning, therefore, *The Nation* has stood for the President's proposal plus an amendment. The first of our objectives is now on the way to being accomplished. We still feel that something like the President's proposal should be passed. But since the court can be counted on to continue its present trend, Mr. Roosevelt would do well to agree to a measure that does not defeat his essential aim and then proceed to channel the strongest energies of the country into more fundamental judicial reform. Even the conservatives have spoken for an amendment. It is time to test their good faith.

Showdown in Rome

THE visit of Juan March and the rumored second visit of General Göring have made Rome once more the focal point in European developments. It may be assumed that Señor March, who is the principal financial backer of the Spanish rebels, is asking Mussolini for even more extensive aid than has been given in the past. It may likewise be assumed that Mussolini will ask Göring for a pledge of more active intervention by the Reich. But there can be no certainty regarding the decision to be reached. The series of accusations in the semi-official *Giornale d'Italia* against France and the Soviet Union have prepared the way for repudiation of the non-intervention pact if such a step is decided upon. Similarly, the announced construction of a four-million-dollar naval base at Assab indicates that Mussolini has by no means given up his imperial ambitions. But there is nothing to suggest that an irrevocable decision has yet been reached with regard to Spain. It is likely that such a decision will not be made until it is possible to get a clearer idea of the outcome of the present battles on the Cordoba, Bilbao, and Madrid fronts. Il Duce cannot be accused of entertaining a desire for martyrdom.

An important reason for believing that he may draw back before committing Italy to an adventure from which there could be no retreat may be found in the increasing strength of French policy. For the first time since the beginning of the Spanish conflict last July, the Blum government appears to be energetically attempting to check fascist aid to the insurgents. The French reply to the Italian accusations was blunt and direct. From Mussolini's standpoint France has definitely abandoned the type of passive neutrality which has played so completely into his hands in previous months.

The British government's acceptance of the rebels' illegal blockade of Bilbao, on the other hand, suggests that it is not yet ready to abandon its tacit support of Franco. While there are obviously some things which cannot be proved, we have it on good authority that the British government entered into a "gentlemen's agreement" with Italy sometime in January whereby Britain agreed to permit Mussolini to go ahead with his intervention provided it was carried out as unobtrusively as possible and he agreed to use his influence to obtain the withdrawal of German troops from Spain. The Italian defeat at Guadalajara appears to have shaken British confidence in the ultimate victory of the rebels, but it has not induced a change in policy.

Yet England and France dare not work at cross-purposes on a matter as important as the ultimate policy toward Spain. At the beginning of the war Blum yielded somewhat unwillingly to British pressure for an illegal non-intervention policy. The very fact that he is now openly seeking to bring pressure to bear on Italy suggests that this time Britain will have to accommodate itself to French policy if it wishes to escape isolation. With the Socialist congress to be held at Marseilles next Sunday, it is evident that Blum dare not give way. Moreover,

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the success of President Benes's visit to Yugoslavia greatly strengthens the diplomatic position of the democratic countries with respect to Italy. Mussolini will undoubtedly utilize every available device to delay the enforcement of the non-intervention agreement. In this he will have the advantage of the powers' long-established traditions of procrastination and delay.

But the time has passed when secret aid will save the rebels. Mussolini will have to send his regular army or stay out altogether. And it is difficult to believe that he will risk plunging his none-too-effective forces into a first-class war merely to restore his tarnished prestige.

Economics at Harvard

THE recent action of Harvard University in warning two members of its Economics Department that their appointments would be terminated in two years was more than the routine matter which the university wishes it to appear. "Their cases present no unusual features," says an official university statement. We prefer to think otherwise for the honor and good name of Harvard and for the future of social-science instruction in American universities.

What are the facts? On March 31 Dr. Alan Sweezy, instructor in the Economics Department, was called in by Dean Birkhoff and handed a letter stating baldly that the department had recommended his reappointment for three years but that the President's office had cut the appointment to two years and recommended that he use the intervening time to get placed elsewhere. On April 7 Dr. J. Raymond Walsh, of the same department, received a similar call from the Dean. First, however, he was called in by Professor H. H. Burbank, the department head, who sought to break the news to him gently and with great sympathy. Professor Burbank expressed the high admiration of the department for the teaching of both men, and the distress that everyone felt over the action of the Dean and President. He went on, however, to talk of budgetary difficulties and ended with, "We just can't do a thing. Our hands are tied." The interview with the Dean followed. At first he said that the grounds for terminating the appointment were budgetary. When challenged on this, however, he shifted to new ground. "Of course," he said, "it is the judgment of one's peers that is important." Dr. Walsh pointed out that the recommendation for the regular three-year appointment for both Dr. Sweezy and himself had been made by their peers—their associates in the department. With this the Dean again hurriedly left the subject. "You are a brilliant teacher, Mr. Walsh," he said, "a very brilliant teacher indeed. The university does not wish to keep you from taking advantage of the excellent opportunities that are available for you elsewhere." And with that he looked at his watch and terminated the conference.

When on Monday, April 5, the Boston *Traveler* published an account of the incident, the university issued a statement with President Conant's approval saying that the decisions had been made "solely on the grounds of teaching capacity and scholarly ability." Since then there has been a storm of alumni and labor protest.

The issues cannot be reduced to a simple and clear-cut question of academic freedom. The Harvard tradition of freedom is a long and honorable one. Both the instructors involved are liberals, and both have been active in the formation of the Cambridge local of the Teachers' Union. Dr. Walsh came out vigorously in support of the child-labor amendment at the hearings by the Massachusetts legislature. Nevertheless, we cannot believe that Harvard is seeking to govern by "gag rule."

The real issues are more indirect and subtle but just as far-reaching. The first has to do with teaching tenure at Harvard and what criteria should be used in judging a teacher's competence. If the decision on Walsh and Sweezy is not reconsidered, no Harvard teacher can possibly feel safe in the future. For the university has, in the total handling of this matter, shown a shocking degree of irresponsibility. The department, knowing that an earlier decision had been made to send only two men up for promotion, and having chosen the two, nevertheless recommends keeping Walsh and Sweezy. It thus puts the burden of overruling it on the Dean and President. They, in turn, point to the earlier decision and to the budget. Thus the department and the administration pass the buck to each other. All we can fall back upon, therefore, is the last formal statement issued, which bases the decision "solely on the grounds of teaching capacity and scholarly ability." But everyone, including the department, seems to agree that in teaching capacity the men are more than satisfactory—they are brilliant. In the Confidential Guides to Freshmen, in which students express their opinion of the teaching capacity of the faculty, Drs. Walsh and Sweezy have always stood at the top. As for scholarly ability, the fact that Dr. Sweezy had been given two traveling fellowships by the university and that Dr. Walsh only last year was awarded the Wertheim fellowship in labor relations must stand as an earnest of the expectations of their peers. The only safe criteria for judging a teacher's competence lie in the opinion of his fellow-teachers and students.

The second issue is even more important. Harvard is after all a center of learning and teaching. What kind of economics shall be learned and taught there? The two men involved were among the few in the department who stood for a realistic approach to economics in terms of an awareness of the struggles of the day and a desire to analyze our property institutions. These deviations from the accepted neo-classical and Austrian schools of economic theory are now on the way to being eliminated. Admiration for the ability of these two men on the part of the members of the department is evidently not incompatible with a sense of discomfort at the direction of their thought. The final responsibility for the decision as taken must rest with the department. The final responsibility for reconsidering the decision must rest with the administration. A university in which only one brand of economics is taught may present the appearance of unity and consistency. But it offers no prospect of growth and no assurance of fulfilling its function in our culture.

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Teacher's Pet

THE General Motors strike marked the beginning of a new era. In the old days it was customary for the New York *Times* to send Louis Stark to the scene of first-string "labor trouble" to cover the major aspects of both sides. One could be sure then of a cool, objective, even scholarly account, since Mr. Stark is by common agreement one of the two or three best labor reporters in the country. In the General Motors strike Louis Stark was on hand; but Mr. Russell B. Porter was there too, apparently working the employers' side of the street.

His dispatches must have pleased the public-relations counsel of General Motors, and his glowing stories of that monster in newspaper mache, the Flint Alliance, deserve to rank with some of the creations of Dexter Fellowes. In view of the speed with which the alliance folded up, those dispatches should have earned for Mr. Porter early retirement as a strike reporter for the world's most reliable newspaper. They did lead to his being boycotted by the strikers in Flint. Whereupon Mr. Porter became the hero of a front-page story of the perils of a reporter among the wild men of the C. I. O.—which probably had its effect upon readers who did not recognize the pathetic victim as teacher's pet.

Mr. Porter was not demoted. Instead he went to the head of the class. When the Chrysler strike was called, Stark was missing and Porter emerged as star reporter. His stories seemed to show some improvement in the direction of objectivity. Two weeks ago, however, what seemed to be a pent-up resentment toward the sitdown, the strikers, and the C. I. O. burst out in two stories which must have warmed the hearts of the Chrysler executives then in conference with Mr. Lewis.

On April 2 a "staff correspondent" in Lansing—he was nameless—reported that the union was seeking "desperately tonight to regain control" of the strike situation —referring to a series of small sitdowns which had occurred since the General Motors settlement; and predicted a "red purge" by union leaders. On April 3 a dispatch from Lansing signed by Mr. Porter began with an alarming paragraph:

> Walter P. Chrysler and John L. Lewis resumed their conference . . . in an atmosphere charged with the remembrance of the "quickie" sitdown strikes in General Motors plants this week, the union's drive to "purge" Communist and other trouble-makers from the ranks, and the state elections to be held on Monday.

A little farther on he wrote that "Mr. Lewis and other union leaders *are pictured* [our italics] as stressing their current purge of Communist and other radical elements." Boiling over on to a back page, Mr. Porter insisted that "the union insists that it is doing everything it can to drive out subversive elements"; and then gathering his forces, he rolled together a paragraph which was a masterpiece of Lewis-baiting.

> In this connection [he said] *it was reported* on the *best of authority* [he gave none] that Mr. Lewis, as chairman of the Committee for Industrial Organization, *might* soon send some "flying squadrons" of "strong-arm men" from his own United Mine Workers to Flint and possibly to Detroit . . . to keep the trouble-makers in line [*italics ours*].

Toward the end of a long tale full of alarums and excursions, Mr. Porter revealed that Governor Murphy, at least, was far less disturbed by a few spontaneous sitdowns than was the reporter for the New York *Times*. He even quoted the Governor's very sensible and soothing statement which urged the public to bear in mind that "new labor relationships are being worked out here in Michigan. . . . This process is attended by minor difficulties, but that is all." But Mr. Porter's temperature did not fall. Farther on he made as if to cover the labor side by saying that union leaders, who ought to know, emphasized that their "purge" (Mr. Porter's word) was not directed against Communists as such; he immediately overruled them, however, by asserting that the "purge" was directed against the inciters of "unauthorized sitdowns for the sake of ultimate revolutionary objectives" —Porter speaking. In his very last paragraph he did manage to state the union's point of view, namely, that while some difficulties are to be expected of a young and rapidly growing organization, it has sound leadership and is entirely responsible. But these twelve lines could hardly be expected to counteract the red scare that had run rampant through three columns.

On the same day, in the Sunday magazine section, Mr. Porter, writing of "The Broad Challenge of the Sitdown," developed further the thesis of its "revolutionary objectives." The sitdown, like the general strike, is, to be sure, a possible revolutionary technique. So far the automobile workers have used it only to force employers to confer with their union representatives. But this obvious and simple fact did not prevent Mr. Porter from intoning portentously that the workers have employed it to "correct the abuses of the old economic order." And he gave full play to those "critics" who see the sitdown leading to "chaos, anarchy, mob rule, and dictatorship in successive steps."

It is a token of Mr. Porter's good intentions perhaps that within a week he had arrived at a more sober view—when the strike had been settled and sobriety was less essential. In another Sunday story he indicated that the "wildcat" sitdowns had been mainly the result of an excess of enthusiasm and a new sense of freedom rather than attempts at revolution; he seemed confident that the union would be able to control its men, the union "purge" was presented in its true light as being mainly directed at stool pigeons and provocateurs; and the raids by "flying squadrons" of "strong-arm" men from the United Mine Workers appeared only as the dispatching of veteran union campaigners to give their fellow-unionists in automobiles the benefit of long experience.

Mr. Porter is an inferior sociologist, which might be forgiven in a newspaperman; his own hindsight shows that he is also a careless and highly excitable observer under fire—which is inexcusable.

We want Stark!

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WASHINGTON WEEKLY

BY PAUL W. WARD

Will Roosevelt Hold Down Prices?

Washington, April 11

A FEW weeks ago there appeared in this space a dispatch entitled Planning the Next Depression. It reported that important federal economists and other members of the real Brain Trust were privately fearful that in little more than a year the nation was going to be plunged into a depression more severe than the last and one for which it would find itself even less well prepared. Since then those hidden fears have forced their way to the surface. First, Secretary Wallace sounded off on the dangers inherent in the current boom in prices. Then the Federal Reserve Board's chairman, Marriner Eccles, set up an alibi in anticipation of an impending crash by subtly inserting in the record a notation that the New Deal's monetary and fiscal controls, previously touted as depression preventives, could not be counted on to check suicidal price rises produced by monopolistic devices. Meanwhile, Henry Morgenthau, already harassed by prospects that federal tax receipts this year will fall half a billion below the total he had counted on, faced the prospect that price increases will reduce the effectiveness of federal expenditures for the next fiscal year and thus throw his beloved budget farther out of gear; he held some very secret conferences on the matter but kept his mouth shut so far as the public was concerned. Harry Hopkins, busy fighting for a relief appropriation that must be much bigger than Roosevelt is willing to allow, got even busier when he was persuaded that the lumber which cost the WPA $40,000,000 this year will cost it $50,000,000 next year, or, in short, that the meager relief appropriation he can count on will not even go as far as he had expected.

Finally, the President himself took a hand, or so it seemed to many a week ago, and at a press conference on April 2 let go with both barrels at the skyrocketing tendency of prices in the durable-goods industries, particularly steel and copper. It was plain he had at last been persuaded that the crash-provoking conditions of 1929 were returning despite his repeated pledge to banish them for all eternity and at any cost. For a few minutes on April 2 it looked as if the President was ready to fight to prevent a recurrence of that awful disparity between profits and purchasing power which produced the last depression, but now there is large room for doubt.

The case for doubt as yet is purely circumstantial. There is space here to set down only a few of its salient points, including the sudden appearance of Donald Richberg in the picture a few days ago; and that space must be further reduced to make room for a brief review of the price picture itself and the effect upon it of the President's recent utterances. The picture frames itself in the statement that, as figures of the Bureau of Labor Statistics show, the wholesale price level is now within easy jumping distance of the 1929 average and is soaring so fast that the wholesale index shows an increase of 11.5 per cent in the last twelve months. More important still is the fact that there has been an increase of 10 per cent in prices since last September and of 2.6 per cent within the past month. The more important types of steel have jumped 22 per cent in price in a year and are now 10 to 13 per cent above their 1929 levels. Cement prices also are above 1929 levels. Copper prices have jumped nearly 100 per cent in a year, while lumber, rubber, zinc, and lead prices have been climbing 20 to 60 per cent. Nearly all these dizzy price rises in vital, basic commodities have been produced by monopolistic devices, nearly all of them have occurred in industries tied up with international cartels, and nearly all of them have followed a planned reduction in stocks on hand which the New Deal has helped these industries to achieve at the public's expense. In none of these industries, with the possible exception of steel, has there been a rise in production to match the rise in prices, and in none is there a condition approximating scarcity except of the kind that monopoly devises for profit's sake.

John T. Flynn has suggested what these price increases mean in human terms by pointing out that canceling the annual pay rolls of the steel, automobile, and rubber industries and throwing out of work their hundreds of thousands of employees would take no more out of the national till than the price increases since September have done. The human side of the thing also is reflected in the finding of Louis H. Bean, AAA economic adviser, that "the various processes of recovery" have increased the average industrial worker's income from $933 in 1933 to $1,180 in 1936, and that the increase in food prices alone has gobbled up $69 out of this $187 increase, leaving the average worker $118 with which to meet price increases in other items. The recent price increases so alarmingly recorded by the Bureau of Labor Statistics wholesale index are only beginning to make themselves felt in retail channels, where the average worker spends most of his $1,180 a year. Their full force will not be felt there until next fall. All that the President's thundering at the price-boosters has accomplished to date has been a slight sagging of rubber, cotton, copper, hides, silk, and cocoa quotations, and since these are all highly speculative commodities, the slight recession in their prices this past week may be nothing more than a passing tendency to wince when the President cracks his rhetorical whip. The steel magnates did not wince, but thundered back with a defense of present prices,

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which some of the economists here thought contained a threat of further price boosts.

It was at steel prices that the President directed most of his attack, and in the attack itself we find most of the circumstantial evidence for doubt of the validity of his intentions. He had before him a host of concrete recommendations as to what the government might do to halt the mad rush of prices and prevent impending chaos. But overlooking a series of recommendations for frontal attacks on the devices of monopoly, including the tariff wall and the patent laws, he elected to use publicity, namely, his own voice, combined with a threat to halt government purchases of steel, copper, and other durable goods if their prices kept on skyrocketing. He was trying by the device of publicity to subject to the pressure of public opinion that group of industries farthest removed from public influence and best armored against it by the devices of corporate ownership. And by talk of a shift in federal spending policies he was trying to threaten that group of industrialists which is least impressed by threats from the White House. The steel industry, for example, has tangled with Mr. Roosevelt on no less than six major occasions since the New Deal began, and each time has made him bend the knee. Not even the receipt in December, 1934, of reports from the NRA and the Federal Trade Commission which agreed, in effect, that the steel industry was more powerful than the government could move him to attempt disproof of that insulting thesis. On the contrary, he assigned Mr. Richberg to the task of trying to get it erased from the reports before they were made public and, more particularly, of getting the FTC to temper its finding that the industry's pricing practices, to which Roosevelt had given his blessing in the steel code, were a violation of the anti-trust laws and inimical to the public welfare. Even the NRA report, with which Richberg was more successful, contained evidences of the steel industry's arrogance; it noted that the NRA had been unable to obtain through the code authority certain essential information about the industry.

One of the reasons that the steel magnates knew they had no reason to fear the President's bluster of April 2 was that just a week earlier Attorney General Cummings had let it be known that the Justice Department, after nearly a year of intensive investigation, had been unable to find evidence justifying prosecution of the industry under the anti-trust laws. A few months ago John Dickinson had told a House committee the same thing in executive session. Dickinson was then head of the Justice Department's anti-trust division, and he was the same Dickinson who, before entering federal service, had helped prepare the Sugar Institute's defense to an anti-trust prosecution, finally lost by the institute in the Supreme Court. The investigation to which Cummings referred and which Dickinson had directed was ordered by the President more than a year ago, after Ickes had raised a row about collusive bids on PWA steel contracts and had sent to the White House the whole mess of identical bids on contract after contract. Having passed the buck to the Justice Department, Roosevelt promptly forgot the matter, or so he indicated when at a press conference four days after his initial attack on steel prices he was asked what had come of the investigation he had ordered. He thanked the inquirer for reminding him of it and directed a secretary further to refresh his memory by asking the Justice Department about the probe. That inquiry had this apparent result: at a press conference three days later, when asked again about the fate of the investigation, he announced that he had asked Cummings and Richberg to make an investigation and report to him on pricing practices in the durable-goods industries. Richberg, no longer a federal employee, is the same Richberg who in April, 1935, as acting chairman of the NRA, censored and suppressed the NRA's report of an investigation the President had ordered nearly a year earlier of the effect of an executive order of June, 1934, aimed at restoring competitive bidding for public contracts by removing the excuse which would-be contractors were advancing for the predominance of identical bids. In the version of the report which Richberg sent to the White House and permitted to be made public he held that the available data did not justify definite conclusions of any kind. He also held that identical bids were a symbol of perfect competition. The report, before Richberg censored and abbreviated it, said the President's order had "not served to loosen at all the grip of strongly organized industries upon the prices and upon the consumers of their products." It found that, if anything, the incidence of identical bids had increased after the President's order was issued, and it drew the supporting data —which Richberg had belittled as insufficient evidence— from weekly reports from 102 federal, state, and municipal purchasing agents, plus a survey of practically all bids received by federal purchasing agents since January 1, 1933.

Another reason that the steel magnates must have known that Roosevelt's threat to divert federal spending away from steel and other durable-goods industries and into consumers' goods was not serious is that the great federal expenditures for steel and allied products have been made in the last year or more not as a part of the WPA and PWA programs to which he referred but through the Navy and War departments as part of the New Deal's record-breaking armaments program. Roosevelt gave no sign of planning to curb that program.

The chief effect of Mr. Roosevelt's little speech was to provide a form of justification for his intention of cutting relief outlays to the bone. And it seems to have escaped attention in most places that Mr. Roosevelt's price outburst served the additional purpose of sounding the death knell of low-cost housing legislation. He was asked about that and replied that though housing legislation might be passed at this session, any real attempt to put it into operation through a program of actual construction would have to be deferred for a year or more. With those words he pigeonholed another one of the recommendations he had received for snatching the body politic back from the rim of chaos; the experts had suggested that a real housing program was one way to do the trick.

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I Stand with the Spanish People

BY THOMAS MANN

Küsnacht, Switzerland

I WAS not born a political man, that is to say, a partisan whose will exercises restraints and limitations upon his intellect. Nor is it interest that bids me speak, but only my suffering and indignant conscience. It is interest that commits all the great rascalities in the world. As now in Spain. Then whose affair is it, if not the creative artist's—the man's whose emotions are free—to assert the human conscience against the baseness of interest, at once so presumptuous and so petty; to protest against the stultifying, all-embracing confusion made in our time between politics and villainy?

There is no lower kind of scorn than that visited upon the artist who "descends into the arena." And the ground of that scorn is interest—interest which prefers to gain its ends in darkness and silence, unchecked by the forces of the intellect or the spirit. Interest would confine artists to their proper domain of the cultural by telling them that politics is beneath their dignity. The result is that the cultural becomes the slave of interest, its accessory and accomplice, all for the false coin of a little dignity in return. The artist must not see that in this stately retreat to his ivory tower he is committing an act of anachronistic folly—must not see, yet today can hardly fail to see.

Democracy is a realized and intrinsic fact today to the extent that politics is everybody's business. Nobody can deny this; it stares us in the face with an immediacy never known before. Sometimes we hear somebody say, "I take no interest in politics." The words strike us as absurd, and not only absurd but egotistical and anti-social, a stupid self-deception, a piece of folly. But they are more; they betray an ignorance not only intellectual but ethical. For the politico-social field is an undeniable and inalienable part of the all-embracing human; it is one section of the human problem, the human task, which the non-political man thinks to set off, as the decisive and actual, against the political sphere. The decisive and the actual: it is indeed that, for in the guise of the political the problem of the human being, man himself, is put to us today with a final, life-and-death seriousness unknown before. Then shall the artist—he who by nature and destiny ever occupies humanity's farthest outposts—shall he alone be allowed to shirk a decision?

Life-and-death seriousness. I use these words to express the conviction that a man's—and how much more an artist's—opinions are today bound up with the salvation of his soul. I deliberately use a religious terminology; so convinced am I that an artist who in our time avoids the issue, shirks the human problem when politically presented, and betrays to interest the things of the spirit is a lost soul. He must be stunted; not only because he sacrifices his existence as an artist, his "talent," and produces nothing more which is available for life, but because even his earlier work, not created under the pressure of such guilt and once good, will cease to be good and crumble to dust before humanity's eyes. That is my conviction. I have instances in mind as I write.

I shall be asked what I mean by spirit and what by interest. Well, then, the spiritual, seen from the politico-social angle, is the longing of the people for better, juster, happier conditions of life, more adequate to the developed human consciousness. And interest—interest is all that which seeks to thwart this consummation because it would thereby be cut off from certain advantages and privileges. In Spain interest rages. Rages with a shamelessness such as the world has seldom seen. What has been happening there for many months is one of the most scandalous and mortifying pages which history has to show. Does the world see it, feel it? Only very partially. For murderous interest understands only too well how to besot the world and throw dust in its eyes.

Have we then no hearts? No understanding? Shall we let ourselves be unresistingly deprived of our last remnant of free human judgment by interest, which unfailingly appeals to the worst instincts, though it clothe itself in lying names such as order, culture, God, and native land? A people held down and exploited with all the instruments of the most obsolete reaction strives toward a brighter existence more compatible with human dignity, a social order more creditable to the face of civilization. There freedom and progress are conceptions not yet vitiated by philosophical irony and skepticism. For these people they are conditions of national honor, values to be striven for to the utmost. The government, with all the caution prescribed by the special circumstances, undertakes to remove the grossest abuses, to carry out the most imperative reforms. What happens? An insurrection of generals, occurring in the interest of the old exploiters and oppressors, concocted with the help of hopeful foreign interest, blazes up and misfires. When it is already as good as beaten, it is propped up by foreign governments inimical to freedom in return for promises of strategic and economic advantage in case of victory. It is supported by money, men, and material, fostered and prolonged, until there seems no end to the bloodshed, the tragic, ruthless, obstinate carnage. Against a people desperately fighting for its freedom and its human rights the troops of its own colony are led into battle. Its cities are demolished by foreign bombing planes, women and children are butchered; and all this is called a national movement; this villainy crying out to heaven is called God, Order, and Beauty. If the interested European press could have its way, the capital would have fallen long since; the triumph of Order and Beauty

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over the Marxist rabble would long since have been consummated. But the half-demolished capital is not yet conquered, and the "red mob," as the interested press puts it in referring to the Spanish people, is defending its life, its higher life, with a lion-like courage which must make even the most besotted slave of interest pause and consider the moral forces here engaged.

The right of peoples to self-determination enjoys high official honor throughout the world today. Even our dictators and our totalitarian states lay stress upon it, finding it important to show that they have 90 to 98 per cent of their people behind them. Well, so much is clear: the revolting military have not got the Spanish people behind them and cannot pretend that they have. They must do their best with Moors and foreign troops. It may not be quite settled what the Spanish people want. But what they do not want is abundantly clear—General Franco. Those European governments which are interested in the strangulation of freedom have recognized as legal the rebel junta, in the midst of a furious struggle which they support even if they did not connive at its inception. At home they betray a considerable degree of sensitiveness in the matter of high treason. In Spain they support a man who delivers up his country to the foreigner. At home they call themselves nationalists. In Spain they enforce the power of a man to whom his country's independence is naught if he can do to death freedom and the rights of humanity, who declares that rather shall two-thirds of the Spanish people die than that Marxism—that is to say, a better, juster, more humane order—shall triumph.

Who Owns the Air?

BY RUTH BRINDZE

CONGRESS is again discussing the broadcasting monopoly, and in preparation for the investigation which appears to be indicated, the radio industry is assuming the role of injured innocence.

The facts, as the broadcasters present them, are these. On January 1, 1937, the National Broadcasting Company owned only ten stations and operated five others. An even less impressive number of stations is owned and operated by the Columbia Broadcasting System: in all there are ten, eight owned by the system and two operated under leases. The Mutual Broadcasting System, the third national network, is a cooperative enterprise and owns no stations.

Of the 685 radio stations in the United States, then, the two major chains have absolute control over only 25. Even if all stations affiliated with the networks were included, the total would be by no means overwhelming. In the blue and red networks of the National Broadcasting Company there are 111, in the Columbia System 99. In other words, only 29 per cent of the radio stations in the country are members of one of the Big Two.

But in the radio world it is not numbers that count but transmitting power and the desirability of the wave length. The major networks and the Mutual System control every high-powered station in the country and every clear channel. Their stations are so strategically located that the network programs are transmitted from the Atlantic Coast to the Pacific, from Mexico to Canada. Of the 22,869,000 "radio homes" in the United States, the National Broadcasting Company estimates that it reaches approximately 22,500,000. The circulation claimed by the Columbia network is even greater.

But the dominant position of the chains is even more clearly illustrated by the power of their transmitting apparatus. The total transmission power of all broadcasting stations in the United States is 2,634,200 watts. This is divided among networks and independents as follows:

NBC Red and Blue Networks.....	1,686,100 watts
Columbia Broadcasting System.....	644,900 "
Mutual Broadcasting System.....	690,200 "
Total controlled by the chains...	2,447,600 "
Total controlled by all others....	186,600 "

(Allowance has been made for the duplication of membership of stations in Mutual and one of the other chains.)

In other words, the stations that comprise the two major networks have 88.4 per cent of the total transmitting power; the three leading networks have 92.9 per cent. Broadcasting in the United States is the networks' show. And the networks are operated by a few banker-dominated corporations.

The National Broadcasting Company, wholly owned subsidiary of the Radio Corporation of America, controls the most powerful chain in the country. Its board of directors is chosen from the directorate of the R. C. A.; its president is named by men who are directors of the broadcasting subsidiary as well as of the parent company. Although it is frequently asserted that the broadcasting unit is operated independently of the Radio Corporation, its management is directly responsible to the men who direct the affairs of the radio trust. Who are these men and what interests do they represent?

The chairman of the board is General James G. Harbord, a Morgan man. The retired general is also a director of the Bankers' Trust Company (which loaned $20,000 to the Liberty League), of the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fé Railroad, and of the American Legion Publishing Corporation. The members of the board are Newton D. Baker, legal adviser to Morgan utilities; Cornelius Bliss, a member of the investment firm of Bliss, Fabyan and Company and a director of the Bankers' Trust Company; Arthur E. Braun of Pittsburgh, president of the Mellon-dominated Farmers' Deposit National Bank;

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Bertram Cutler, described in Poor's "Register of Directors" as "with John D. Rockefeller"; John Hays Hammond, Jr., consulting engineer both for R. C. A. and its two former affiliates, General Electric and Westinghouse; Edward J. Nally, a septuagenarian who retired from active service in 1925; Edward Harden, DeWitt Millhauser, and Frederick Strauss, representatives of the brokerage houses and underwriters which have helped to raise funds for the R. C. A.; James R. Sheffield, corporation lawyer, former president of the Union League Club and the National Republican Club; and David Sarnoff, whose rise to fame and fortune is on the Horatio Alger model except that his dominant position in the industry is due largely to his ability to negotiate with bankers. He is chairman of the board of the National Broadcasting Company.

Not only the financial affiliations of the Radio Corporation's directors but their personal sentiments on such important matters as war and peace are significant. Controlling as they do one of the largest networks in the country—and the world—they are in an almost unsurpassed position to mold the public mind. Newton D. Baker was, of course, President Wilson's Secretary of War. General Harbord is a retired army man who believes that "war represents a permanent factor in human life and a very noble one. It is the school of heroism from which a nation's noblest sons graduate into highest manhood." Colonel Manton Davis, general attorney for the Radio Corporation, testified at a Congressional hearing a few years ago that the trust was "an organization whose every important official and technician is a reserve officer of the army or navy." John Hays Hammond, Jr., although not a munitions manufacturer, is through his inventions closely allied to the murder-for-profit industry; Major Lenox R. Lohr, who succeeded Merlin H. Aylesworth as president of the N. B. C., came to his post from the army via the Chicago World's Fair. Altogether, a jingoistic crew to intrust with the control of public opinion.

Unlike its competitor, the Columbia Broadcasting System is not affiliated with any manufacturer of radio equipment. Since 1932, when it bought back the 50 per cent interest in the network which had been sold to Paramount-Famous-Players-Lasky corporation four years before, the Columbia Broadcasting System has been controlled by the Paley family—and by the bankers who supplied the cash needed to repurchase the stock from Paramount.

When the network was founded in 1927 as the United Independent Broadcasters, Inc., the captains of the electrical-equipment business, who were steadily losing money on the National Broadcasting Company, were tremendously amused at the idea of a profit from broadcasting. The founders of the new organization—Major J. Andrew White, one of the old-timers of commercial broadcasting and formerly a vice-president of the R. C. A. subsidiary; Wireless Press, Inc.; Arthur Judson, manager of concert stars; and George A. Coats, a promoter—were soon in a bad hole. In the nick of time a good angel appeared in the form of the Columbia Phonograph Company, which bought the operating rights of United Independent because it was worried by the premature announcement that its rival, the Victor Talking Machine Company, was about to be gathered in by the acquisitive Mr. Sarnoff. But after three months of broadcasting at a loss reputed to have been $100,000 a month, the phonograph company was ready to retire. United Independent bought back the operating company, then known as the Columbia Phonograph Broadcasting System, for $10,000.

Dr. Leon Levy, a former dentist and the owner of WCAU, one of the original stations in the network, produced the next angel, Jerome H. Louchheim, owner of a racing stable, friend of the late W. W. Atterbury, and a member of Philadelphia's inner financial circle. In 1928 Dr. Levy's brother-in-law, William Samuel Paley, appeared on the scene. Affairs at Columbia were in fairly good order, but the National Broadcasting Company still had no cause to worry about competition. It had prestige, a treasury which the General Electric and the Westinghouse companies kept full, a preferential contract with the Bell System, and the stations with the best wave lengths. Columbia was poor, and it had to take the stations that N. B. C. did not want. Mr. Paley's triumph is a success story of the millionaire who made good. The original sum by which he became the dominant stockholder is estimated to have been $300,000, and his total investment to date is said to be over a million and a half. Except for the representatives of the bankers, Mr. Louchheim, and Herbert B. Swope, the board of directors of C. B. S. is a family affair. Besides William S. there are Samuel and Jacob Paley, Isaac D. Levy, and Dr. Leon Levy.

Dr. Levy supplies an interesting link between Columbia and its chief rival, the National Broadcasting Company. Dr. Levy is the managing director of station WCAU, Columbia's Philadelphia outlet; in 1936 he was also the managing director of KYW, a Westinghouse station which is the Philadelphia unit of the National Broadcasting Company's red network. This was carrying to an extreme Philadelphia's reputation for brotherly love. Apparently Dr. Levy was not troubled by a situation which forced him to compete with himself for business and to further the interests of N. B. C. while a major stockholder and a member of the board of its chief rival.

There is another indirect tie-up between the two networks. Herbert B. Swope is a director of the Columbia Broadcasting System and a member of its executive committee. His brother, Gerard Swope, is head of the General Electric Company, one of the corporations which originally organized the R. C. A. Until the spring of 1936 Herbert Swope was also chairman of the board of Keith-Albee-Orpheum, a subsidiary of the Radio-Keith-Orpheum Corporation, in which the R. C. A. had substantial financial interests.

The bankers' representatives were added to the Columbia Broadcasting System's board after the financiers had put up the cash required to buy back control of the network from Paramount. The firms which helped with this and subsequent financing, and which for their efforts were given approximately 50 per cent of the C. B. S. Class A stock, are Brown Brothers, Harriman and Company,

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W. E. Hutton and Company, and Lehman Brothers. Their representatives on the board are Prescott S. Bush, partner in Brown Brothers; Joseph A. W. Iglehart, partner in Hutton and Company; and Dorsey Richardson of the Lehman firm. Except that Brown Brothers was on Morgan's preferred list, there appears to be no tie-up with the house of Morgan.

The history of Columbia illustrates the danger of treating a great radio chain merely as a profit-making venture. It has been bartered back and forth, first to the Columbia Phonograph Company, then to Louchheim, then to Paramount, and finally to the bankers. A minor item like the social significance of control of the air can of course play no part in finance. So far the bankers and the other members of the board have been well satisfied with President Paley and his policies. "Mr. Paley, as a business man," writes *Fortune,* "is a theme that practically brings tears to the eyes of his directors—never in all their lives, they say, have they been associated with anybody so clever at business. Not only is he a master advertiser and feeler of the public pulse, but these gentlemen say that he is the greatest organizer, the best executive, the quickest thinker, the coolest negotiator they have ever seen."

President Paley has always understood the value of political connections. To head the department of station relations he selected Sam Pickard, described by *Fortune* as "the brightest commissioner." Pickard resigned as a federal radio commissioner to take the Columbia job. In 1933 Mr. Paley added to his executive personnel Henry Adams Bellows, also a former radio commissioner and a classmate at Harvard of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Vice-President Bellows was placed in charge of Columbia's Washington station WJSV and proved a most useful ambassador of C. B. S. in Washington during the first days of the New Deal. Both Bellows and Pickard have now resigned. But even though the two former radio commissioners are no longer on active duty, the network stands in well with the Federal Communications Commission and has received many favors from it.

Slow Death in Illinois

BY MILTON S. MAYER

Peoria, Illinois, March 31

LAST September the 1,400 foundry workers at the Caterpillar Tractor Company here were given a complete physical examination. They weren't told why; Caterpillar wasn't in the habit of discussing anything, except how to vote, with its "earthworms," as they called themselves. Every employee had been examined at the time he was hired; this had been customary ever since the company moved from California, seven years before, in the face of "labor trouble" there. But this mass examination was different: it included an X-ray of the chest.

The men were never told the results of the examination. But on November 13 the foundry was shut down for the installation of "new machinery," protective devices to comply with the new Illinois Occupational Diseases Act. On November 19 the men received their pay checks for the week ending the thirteenth. The envelopes of 179 men contained a slip of paper. It was not another of President Heacock's encyclicals against the New Deal. It was an order to appear at the company's personnel office the following morning.

The 179 men were led into the presence of the personnel manager in groups of 20. Some 80 to 100 were told they were first-class silicotics. The rest were second and third class. The company was sorry, very sorry, but its insurers had refused to carry the risk on these men. There was nothing to be done about it. The men's work —many of them had been there since the plant opened— was satisfactory. But the company had no choice.

Ten days later the new Occupational Diseases Act went into effect, providing decent, if not liberal, compensation for silicotics, and holding the last employer of a silicotic fully liable. A year and a half before, the old act, which had been in operation since 1911, had been held unconstitutional in a series of decisions notorious even for the Illinois Supreme Court. "Boys," said one of the condemned earthworms, as they stood outside the "sunshine" plant talking it over, "it looks like we haven't got a lung to stand on." The boys laughed, but some of them suddenly had to sit down, because the exertion of laughing left them winded.

The earthworms at Caterpillar work for one of the most profitable monopolies in the country. Holding basic patents, the company is the largest manufacturer of track-type tractors in the world. Whenever there is a war anywhere, the company's exports of unassembled "tractors" jump. Sales in 1936 amounted to $54,000,000, a 48 per cent increase over 1935. Net income for 1936 was $9,850,000, compared with $5,949,000 for 1935. Increase in volume of 1936 operations, Standard Statistics points out, "more than absorbed advancing wages and higher material costs." The company's 1937 income to date is far above that for the corresponding period of 1936.

The 179 discharged men knew that under the laws— actually, under the absence of laws—of the state of Illinois the company was in the clear. They knew that they were dying of an incurable disease, contracted in making machinery "to be used," as President Heacock puts it, "to advance the welfare of mankind." They knew that they would never get work anywhere else, because no employer would be fool enough to trap himself un-

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der the "last-employer" liability clause of the new act.

Caterpillar paid its foundry workers a base rate of 52½ cents an hour, since raised to 62½ cents following similar raises in steel. The company "voluntarily" operated on a forty-hour week—without, however, a minimum weekly wage—and provided its 12,000 employees with all the furbelows of paternalism—girls' club, baseball league, and the like. The biggest industry in Peoria, Caterpillar exemplified the city's vaunted open-shop traditions. Half a dozen impotent A. F. of L. unions had a few members apiece in the Caterpillar plant. The molders' union struck the foundry in 1934, and when the strike was broken, its membership fell to twenty-five or thirty.

The silica dust in the Caterpillar foundry was so thick that the men operating hand trucks collided in the main gangway. There were no masks at all, except for the two men operating the pressure hoses in the sand-blast, and no partitions separating the blasting and cleaning rooms from the rest of the foundry. The swing-grinders carried the carborundum dust directly into the face of the man ahead. The sand used for cleaning, instead of being drawn off, rose to the ceiling and floated through the foundry, hanging in a cloud everywhere. Floors were not swept between shifts. Men assigned to sprinkling were transferred to "useful" jobs. Broken doors hung open for a month, creating a draft that kept the dust from settling. Cranemen working twenty feet above the men on the floor couldn't see the floorman's signal to raise or lower.

The company has never denied the existence of these conditions in the foundry—which President Heacock describes as "a pretty good place in which to work"—nor, since silicosis was inevitable under the circumstances, has it denied that the men contracted it there. The turnover was very high. Men quit after a few days because they couldn't breathe or keep their eyes open. But farm boys, whom the company preferred to the wiser denizens of the city, were plentiful. Workers didn't know they had silicosis until long after they had quit, and some of them never knew it. One Caterpillar silicotic who died last month at the age of thirty-one was never able to work again after nine months in the foundry in 1932. His widow and three small children live in a shanty outside Peoria. The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, in which all Caterpillar workers carry a group policy, paid him $10 a week for the first year of his disability, then $36 a month until his death, and then a $2,000 death benefit, most of which will go to the doctor, the undertaker, and the lawyer.

The brazenness of the Caterpillar Company is perhaps unique in the long story of industrial murder. To understand it you have to understand Peoria. Peoria has grown rich on boom industries and the American Way. Its population of industrial serfs has increased from 75,000 in 1920 to 150,000 today. The law and the press are the errand boys of the Merchants' and Manufacturers' Association. The slot-machine syndicate operates even in grocery stores. Prostitution displays the red lights of a long gone era. The baseball pool, which amounts to $5,000 on Saturdays, has its headquarters in an all-day, wide-open gambling joint on a main-floor front in the heart of the city. The employees in such factories as the Peoria Cordage Company may live in piano boxes on Cinder Point, but the mansions on Grand View Drive are evidence that the open shop pays, even if operating expenses include the politicians.

A successful general strike in Pekin, ten miles away, last February taught the Peoria industrialists nothing. The 1936 election, in which the Democrats swept Peoria County for the first time, taught the Peoria industrialists nothing. The coming of the C. I. O. last summer taught them nothing. Their espionage system, operating at maximum efficiency in plants like the Caterpillar, would take care of the workers, and the company-owned city police, old hands at mauling "agitators," would take care of the John L. Lewises. The Caterpillar Company was sorry, very sorry, that its negligence had pitted the lungs of 179 men, but this was Peoria.

When the silicotics asked the company for claim blanks furnished by the Metropolitan, Caterpillar's Mr. Carlson refused them. "You aren't sick," he said, "and you aren't disabled." Last month the Metropolitan sent an agent to Peoria to investigate. The agent told the men that the company's report to the Metropolitan stated that the wholesale discharge was due to "a reduction in the force." Meanwhile the victims sent a committee to see President Heacock. President Heacock was sorry, but he didn't see what he could do for them. "Labor seems to control the state government," he told the committee. "Maybe somebody in Springfield can help you." The men pointed out that the new act permitted incipient silicotics to remain on the job if they waived 50 per cent of all future compensation. "A small firm might be able to accept such waivers in a few cases," said President Heacock, "but a big firm can't be bothered."

Some of the men were members of the molders' union. Surely they would get help from the Peoria Trades and Labor Assembly, which had just described Heacock in his capacity of president of the Illinois Manufacturers' Association as "corrupter-in-chief of the Illinois General Assembly." But the A. F. of L. could do nothing for them; its unions had fewer than a thousand members altogether in the Caterpillar plant. The men nobody wanted began filing suits against the Caterpillar Company, charging negligence. The Illinois Industrial Commission "persuaded" the company to underwrite its own occupational-disease risk and rehire the less seriously afflicted men, thereby reducing the suits.

From forty-five to fifty cases are awaiting the outcome of the $75,000 test suit now in federal court. The company has moved to dismiss the suit on the ground that silicotics have no remedy under the common law of Illinois—the last appeal of these condemned men and of hundreds of other Illinois workers discharged between the collapse of the old Occupational Diseases Act and the effective date of the new one. In its brief for dismissal the company called upon the federal court to defer to the unanimous opinion of the Illinois Supreme Court of May 12, 1936, in which Justice Shaw stated: "One

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searches in vain for any precedent at common law establishing any duties as to healthfulness or sanitation." Silicotics having been deprived of health by due process of law, in accordance with both federal and state constitutions, it is likely that the federal court, like the Caterpillar Company, will have to confine its relief to being sorry for the plaintiffs.

But industry's lepers want something more. In the C. I. O. they have found a protagonist. With the automobile and steel victories behind it and the Peoria A. F. of L. mislaying Green's order to turn the rascals out, the C. I. O. is getting under way at Caterpillar, its first Peoria objective. The silicotics—those who are still able to get around—have joined the C. I. O. organizing staff.

A few weeks ago the C. I. O. committee walked into President Heacock's office for a preliminary conference. At President Heacock's invitation more than a hundred Caterpillar "employees," including company executives and craft-union officials, were present. President Heacock read a twenty-minute prepared speech in the course of which he said: " . . . Next let us discuss the most misrepresented group, the owners. . . . About 15,000 common ordinary people did refrain from spending all their income, did save up a few hundred dollars, and did pool their savings to place these buildings and tools here. . . . We believe that every 'Caterpillar' man has a perfect right to discuss his employment with the management any way he pleases. . . . If I want some dirty, stinking Negro or Communist to represent me, I shall not thank the company for signing away my right. . . ."

President Heacock then asked the committee just what their demands were. The committee outlined the United States Steel contract. When they got to the impartial-umpire clause, President Heacock interrupted: "Now, gentlemen, you had just as well withdraw that request. Your ideas of having committees is O. K. You can have all the committees you want. . . . But when you ask that neither you nor we have the authority to manage the business, that can't be, because there wouldn't be any business two years from now if such a ridiculous thing were made operative. That is all an impartial umpire is. . . . *The point is, when there is a disagreement, management opinion goes.*"

[*Shortly after this article was written, the C. I. O., which has a clear majority of Caterpillar's 12,000 earthworms, sent a committee to wait on President Heacock. He agreed to negotiate but refused to sign the agreement. Thereupon the union closed down the plant in a combination of sitdown and walkout. After forty-eight hours the plant reopened with the understanding that collective bargaining is to begin at once.*]

Heart Balm and Seduction

BY WILLIAM SEAGLE

MANY of our state legislatures, in the last few years, have been making tremendous concessions to sex liberalism. Bills abolishing in one swoop all actions for breach of promise, alienation of affection, criminal conversation, and seduction have been introduced into the legislatures of a number of states, and in New York, New Jersey, Illinois, and Indiana they have been enacted into law. Naturally the champions of sex freedom have rejoiced. The great victory in New York received honorable mention at literary cocktail parties. But bankers and brokers, captains of industry, matinee idols, and radio crooners had even more reason to heave sighs of relief.

The rich are the natural victims of the heart-balm racket. As long as money was easy, the payment of heart balm was simply one of the inconveniences of living a fast life. But with the market gone to smash the situation became quite different. That extra twenty-five or fifty thousand was needed to cushion a margin. The charming blackmailer became a genuine menace. Soon the great moguls of the bar began to hear from their wealthy clients, and the lawmakers were advised of their duty.

The Solons were willing. They were, however, guilty of a curious inconsistency. While they abolished the heart-balm actions, they left standing the criminal penalties for seduction. To remove all doubt it was expressly provided in the acts of abolition that they should not be construed as repealing any of the provisions of the penal codes. The discrimination in favor of the rich resulting from this preservation of the criminal penalties is apparent. Since heart-balm actions are civil suits for damages, there is no point in bringing them against any male who is only a few jumps ahead of the WPA. As a practical matter vengeance can be wreaked on the proletarian Don Juan only by invoking the pains and penalties of the criminal law against seduction.

This is the heyday of the New Deal, and it is high time that someone spoke in the interest of the little fellow who has had his fling. The seduction statutes operate in a very precise manner to railroad the importunate but impecunious swain to the altar. They make it a crime to seduce under promise of marriage a "virtuous female" or a "female of previous reputation for chastity." The gravamen of the offense is thus that the woman was induced to surrender her virtue under promise of marriage. Only thirteen states have no provisions for the punishment of seduction as such.

The age of the woman who charges that she has been seduced makes no difference except in a few states, where it must be below either eighteen or twenty-one, in other

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words, intermediary between the age of consent and the age of majority. This is the case in both Illinois and Indiana. But in New York there is no age limit, and the same is true in twenty-one other states. The woman may be sweet sixteen or over forty. Moreover, many courts have held that she may be a widow or a divorcee, and a few courts have even extended the protection of the seduction statutes to a "fallen" woman who has "reformed"!

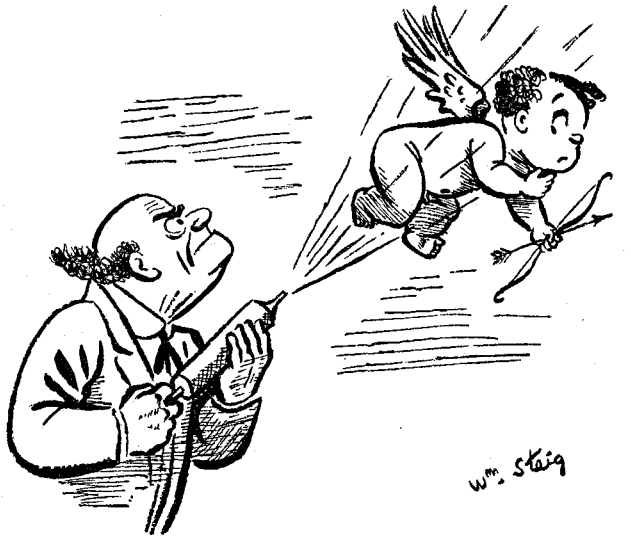
The punishments under the seduction statutes are obviously calculated to make any careless male "do the right thing by the girl." The maximum penalty is usually five years but in several Southern states it is ten. Of course prosecution usually abates if the seducer offers to marry his victim, but this is only to say that seduction is the one crime for which the penalty is marriage. Moreover, in Georgia, Iowa, Oklahoma, Texas, and Washington, prosecution revives or more stringent penalties are applied if the woman is subsequently abandoned within a period ranging from two to five years without such cause as constitutes a valid ground for divorce, and in Georgia if such abandonment occurs at any time after the forced marriage! It is little wonder that many a woman who has been jilted is ready to admit a lapse of virtue to her lawyer and subsequently to the district attorney.

It is a fundamental axiom of the law of domestic relations that it is against public policy to decree the specific performance of a marriage contract. The reason for this highly salutary rule is obvious: the law should not compel a couple to marry who have already demonstrated their incompatibility. But the seduction statutes tend to accomplish the specific performance of promises to marry when the incompatibility of the parties has been demonstrated beyond a doubt. This is legal shotgun marriage with a vengeance.

The greatest paradox of the seduction statutes is that, like most laws which are intended to bolster morality, they actually encourage immorality. In effect the law says to a woman: "If your fiance has jilted you, and you have had no pre-marital experience, you are practically without a remedy. If, however, you have not been virtuous, you can, at the cost perhaps of a little unpleasant publicity, force the man to marry you."

The seduction statutes bespeak the *mores* of the lower classes when the church did not bother too greatly to combat the rather informal habit of common-law marriage. In all parts of the world primitive folk have tended to treat betrothal as practically tantamount to marriage, and old customs often survive in curious forms. It is no wonder that the promise to marry is the essence of the crime of seduction. But when the social level is low, the breach of the promise may be disregarded entirely. Thus in the deep South prosecutions of Negroes for seduction have been practically unknown.

Seduction has never been recognized as a crime by the English common law. In the eighteenth century in England the seduction of wenches of the lower classes by gentlemen was considered almost a privilege of rank. In France and other Latin countries there has, of course, never been recognized any such crime as the seduction



of a mature woman under promise of marriage. Indeed, Germany appears to be the only country in the world except the United States in which this is a major crime.

Since seduction was not a crime at common law, American states had to make it such by statute. Nevertheless the first statutes were long in coming. To the credit of the early Puritans it must be said that they were too realistic to believe in the virtue of a woman who could not resist temptation. To this day almost none of the original New England states has made seduction a crime.

The rapid multiplication of the seduction statutes undoubtedly had some connection with the constant shifting of the frontier. In a frontier community the unattached male is welcome, but because of his unknown past he is also a danger to the all-too-trusting woman. He may have a wife in the East. Indeed in a few states it was made a special crime for a *married* man to seduce a woman under promise of marriage. The later waves of immigration reinforced the argument for seduction statutes. The forgotten wife might now be in Italy, or Russia, or Germany. Moreover, the eighties and nineties were also the heyday of Comstockery, and the idea of the helpless female occupied a prominent place in life and literature. There was still to be popularized the Shavian paradox that it is the woman who seduces the male.

The seduction statutes, however, are far from being dead letters. It is safe to say that several thousand prosecutions for seduction are instituted every year. In New York City in the last decade there have been approximately sixty arrests a year for seduction. In North Carolina in the last three years the annual number of prosecutions has been near the one hundred mark. In Alabama, in the decade from 1922 to 1932, there was an average of fifty-two prosecutions a year.

The chances are that prosecutions for seduction may now increase. The abolition of the civil actions may lead some of the more unscrupulous gold-diggers to attempt to jail even bankers and captains of industry out of a spirit of pure revenge. The heart-balm actions may be *legally* outlawed, but attempts to levy blackmail do not depend so much upon the availability of the legal remedies as on the fear of exposure. The evil has probably only been driven underground. With this thought the little fellows may comfort themselves.

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

The War—Twenty Years After

THESE lines are being formulated on the twentieth anniversary of America's entrance into the World War. In 1917 I was a member of the board of directors of the Associated Press. I sat alone in one of its offices as they brought me the "flash" that Woodrow Wilson had appeared before Congress to demand the declaration of war; of all those Associated Press directors I was the only one to oppose this national action. As I read that dispatch and knew that the end of the fight to keep the United States out of the war had come, I confess I could hardly keep back the tears. It seemed to me as if I were witnessing the death of the American Republic. I knew it was the end of Woodrow Wilson as a liberal leader and of his "New Freedom"—we had to wait twenty years for the New Deal, its successor. I knew that it meant the retarding, if not the destruction, of every liberal and progressive movement and the triumph of black reaction. I was not wrong, for the prosecution of the war was promptly turned over to the very big-business men whom Wilson had inveighed against as the "masters of America" who had stolen the government.

Just one week later, on April 13, 1917, in the midst of the first hysteria of the war, I wrote to my good friend, Joseph P. Tumulty, secretary to President Wilson. Here are some extracts from my letter:

> You have had my sincerest sympathy during these trying days, and I am glad to learn from your message through Dave Lawrence that you have not altogether forgotten me in this crisis. I know how you must have been suffering mentally and morally, and I can, I am sure, wholly enter into the feelings that must have been yours. To see your beloved chief congratulated by Henry Cabot Lodge, warmly indorsed and called upon by Theodore Roosevelt, and acclaimed with joy by every munitions maker, every agent of big business, and all the evil forces combined, against whom he has fought for American democracy until recently—all this, I know, must have caused you profound concern and unhappiness.
>
> As for the conscription proposal, of course you were good enough to prepare me for that. Do you remember our ride with Dave down to Mr. Burleson's office, when you assured me that the President would never, never sign such a bill? And do you remember my saying that you two [the President and Tumulty] were the "weakest links in the chain"? Remembering certain similar incidents in the past, I came back from Washington feeling convinced that the President would be won over to universal service before very long; and my reputation as a prophet has been enhanced.
>
> Believe me I am ready for any concentration camp, or conscription camp, or prison, but I am *not* at war and no one can put me into war—not the President of the United States with all his power. My loyalty to American traditions and ideals renders that impossible.
>
> We shall see what we shall see, but what I should like to know now is, what shall we newspapermen say who loyally supported the President's speech of January 22, in which he said: "It must be a peace without victory. . . . Victory would mean peace forced upon the loser, a victor's terms imposed upon the vanquished. It would be accepted in humiliation, under duress, at an intolerable sacrifice, and would leave a sting, a resentment, a bitter memory upon which terms of peace would rest not permanently but only as upon quicksand"?

Well, the years have brought their compensations. This prophecy of Wilson's which I have just quoted has been triumphantly upheld; his war speeches, with all their fustian, false sentiment, vindictiveness, and, often, falsehood, have perished or are vanishing. I never dreamed that I should live to see an Institute of Public Opinion take a poll in which 70 per cent registered their deliberate opinion that our entry into war was a horrible mistake. Never did I think that I should live to see the twentieth anniversary of the war marked by the most widespread acclaim and recognition of the six Senators and fifty Representatives who stood by their convictions and voted against the war resolution. Senator Norris, the dispatches report, "has never been so sought after for interviews as in the last day or two." Yet I remember how John Sharp Williams, Senator from Mississippi, denounced Norris in the Senate as a disgrace to the United States, "a pro-German, a pro-Goth, a pro-Vandal." Williams is dead and forgotten. In his extraordinary record of achievement, in the majesty of his patriotism, in the glory of his consistent fidelity to conscience, George Norris stands out today as the greatest figure in our Congress. And here is Congressman W. A. Ashbrook, of Ohio, who voted for the war and is still Congressman, admitting what I wrote at the time, that if "the members of the war Congress had voted their honest convictions . . . that great blunder of twenty years ago would not have been made." He does not hesitate to express humiliation and shame that he voted for it.

I am sorry that Woodrow Wilson is not alive, and Robert Lansing, and some of the others who put us into that war. This is not vindictiveness, but only the wish that they might have lived to be convinced of the utter folly, now so completely demonstrated by Adolf Hitler, of their theory that you could shoot democracy into the Germans and militarism out of them. And *are* the foundations of our Republic as safe and sound as when we entered the war? Is the future secure? I seem to recall some words about "All they that take up the sword . . ."

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BROUN'S PAGE

Is There a *Nation?*

THERE has been a good deal of discussion in the pages of this magazine recently as to what is wrong with *The Nation.* What isn't? To my mind the place has become all cluttered up with liberals who have been springing out of odd corners. First it was Oswald Garrison Villard, and now it is Maurice Wertheim who has come forward to urge this weekly to stand with the *Times* and the *Herald Tribune* in the fight for human freedom.

Mr. Villard says that when I get my teeth in the neck of an unfortunate I shake him until all the disgraceful facts about his grandfather, his father, and his predecessor in his present job come tumbling out. I have no recollection of having mentioned anybody's progenitors, since there are enough disgraceful facts in the present generation to occupy the time of even the most industrious columnist. But since Mr. Villard raises the point I think there may be some pertinence in appealing from Oswald Garrison to William Lloyd. The elder Garrison was not one to mince words and in his own polemics he had small patience with liberals and others in the caravan which travels along the middle of the road. He was rude and violent and he intended to be when, in his fight against slavery, he stigmatized the Constitution, after the Taney decision, as "a covenant with Death and an agreement with Hell."

For the sake of his conscience Oswald Garrison Villard is arguing that nothing but an amendment will do and therefore he opposes the plan of Franklin Roosevelt. According to the news reports of Mr. Villard's testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee, he advanced as the ideal amendment one which would clarify and amplify the "general-welfare" clause. And Mr. Villard, according to the press, went on to state with pride that he had been fighting forty years for just such an amendment. And knowing the high character and tenacity of Oswald Garrison Villard I have no doubt that he would be delighted to keep his record clean by continuing the fight for a liberal court through another forty years.

But American industrial and agricultural workers are not content to wait so long. Not even for the sake of maintaining the conscientious scruples of Mr. Villard. Like many liberals I suspect that my confrere enjoys the battle so much that he hates to see an opportunity arise by which the enemy's line may be breached and broken. Much should be said of the gallantry and even the wisdom of those who devote their lives to lost causes, but it does not follow that it becomes vicious to win.

Since Mr. Villard has brought up the interesting problem of ancestry I may admit that I, too, take some fugitive interest in blood lines. Oswald Garrison Villard is the product of an interesting experiment. His grandfather was an abolitionist and his father a railroad magnate. As far as the researches of science have gone, the rule seems to be that when you cross abolition blood with railroad stock you get a liberal.

The case of Maurice Wertheim is a little more simple. Mr. Wertheim is a Wall Street progressive. A Wall Street progressive is a man who has just left the room when the fight begins. If Mr. Wertheim were arguing about a financial matter he would go to the best authorities before making any dogmatic statement. He repeats the familiar assertion that at the present time a constitutional amendment could easily be passed. He throws the child-labor amendment rather blithely out of the picture. You can't do that. The record of that particular amendment shows that at the present time one religious body in the United States has the power to block any change whatsoever in the Constitution. And the present temper of the Catholic church quite evidently is that it wishes to preserve the status quo. Before Mr. Wertheim hits upon an amendment which he feels sure can be passed, let him first go to Cardinal Hayes and get an enabling letter.

And Maurice Wertheim can make another simple test if he cares to go to the best sources of information. In my opinion the correspondents in Washington are extremely well informed as to the political state of the nation. I have put a hypothetical question to at least fifty reporters in the capital and have had an unvarying reply. The question goes like this: "Regardless of your personal opinion as to whether the President's proposals are good or evil, tell me what chance you think any amendment at all would have if Mr. Roosevelt is defeated?" Without exception every single reporter has replied in effect as follows: "If Roosevelt is licked, all the amendment boys can take their several and separate amendments up an alley and throw them in the garbage can. The judgment of the Congress and the country will be that the court and the Constitution are dynamite and that the only safe rule is hands off. If Roosevelt is licked there will be no change whatsoever in the judicial set-up for at least another generation."

I do not know whether I will come again to this pasture. I'm getting a little sick of *The Nation's* policy of fair play, and everybody must be heard whether or not he has anything to say. This isn't an amateur tennis match. It's a fight, and the well-being of masses of men and women depends upon the result. So I am not for the principle of bowing to your adversary and remarking, "After you, sir." Even an open mind needs to pull down the windows at certain times or it becomes less a mind than a cave of the winds. And speaking of open minds, before I put up the shutters I am curious to know just who it is who owns *The Nation.* All I can say is that the pottage isn't very hot and the service is something terrible.

HEYWOOD BROUN

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

WHAT IS A GOOD REVIEW?

BY JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

OF ALL literary forms the book review is the one most widely cultivated and least often esteemed. To many the very phrase "literary form" may smack of pretense when applied to a kind of writing which is usually so casual; and formlessness may, indeed, be the only form of many commentaries on books. Book reviewing can, nevertheless, become an art in itself and would be such more often if the ambitious reviewer would only devote himself to the cultivation of its particular excellences instead of attempting, as he so often does, to demonstrate his capacities by producing something "more than a mere review." The best review is not the one which is trying to be something else. It is not an independent essay on the subject of the book in hand and not an aesthetic discourse upon one of the literary genres. The best book review is the best review of the book in question, and the better it is the closer it sticks to its ostensible subject.

To say this is not to say that a good review is easy to write; in certain technical respects it is, indeed, the most difficult of all forms of literary criticism for the simple reason that in no other is the writer called upon to do so many things in so short a space. The critical essay, no matter how extended it may be, is not compelled to aim at any particular degree of completeness. It may—in fact it usually does—assume that the reader is sufficiently familiar with the work under discussion to make description unnecessary and it may also confine itself to whatever aspects of the subject the critic may choose.

But the book review as a literary form implies completeness; it has not really performed its function unless, to begin with, it puts the reader in possession of the facts upon which the criticism is based, and unless—no matter upon how small a scale—its consideration is complete. However penetrating a piece of writing may be, it is not a good review if it leaves the reader wondering what the book itself is like as a whole or if it is concerned with only some aspects of the book's quality.

I shall not pretend to say how large a proportion of the so-called reviews published in *The Nation* or anywhere else actually achieve the distinguishing characteristics of the book-review form, but a certain number of them do, and the sense of satisfactoriness which they give can always be traced to the fact that, whatever other qualities they may have, they accomplish the three minimum tasks of the book reviewer. They describe the book, they communicate something of its quality, and they pass a judgment upon it.

Each of these things is quite different from the others, but only the last is usually considered as carefully as it ought to be by either reader or writer. Adequate description implies a simple account of the scope and contents of the book; its presence guarantees that the reader will not be left wondering what, in the simplest terms, the book is about. "Communication of quality" implies, on the other hand, a miniature specimen of what is commonly called "impressionistic criticism"; it means that the reviewer must somehow manage to recreate in the mind of the reader some approximation of the reaction produced in his own mind by the book itself. And in however low esteem this form of criticism may be held as a be-all and end-all (Mr. Eliot calls it the result of a weak creative instinct rather than of a critical impulse), it is indispensable in a book review if that review is to perform the function it is supposed to perform, and if it is to become what it is supposed to be—namely, not merely an account of a book on the one hand or an independent piece of criticism on the other, but a brief critical essay which includes within itself all that is necessary to make the criticism comprehensible and significant.

Your "reviewer" often envies the more lofty "critic" because the critic is supposed to be read for his own sake while the reviewer must assume that the reader is attracted more by his interest in the book discussed than by the reviewer himself. For that very reason he is likely either to treat reviewing as a casual affair or to seek for an opportunity to write something else under the guise of a review. He might be happier himself and make his readers happier also if he would, instead, take the trouble to ask what a review ought to be and if he would examine his own work in the light of his conclusions. It is not easy to do within the space of a thousand words or less the three things enumerated. It is less easy still to combine the description, the impression, and the judgment into a whole which seems to be, not three things at least, but one.

How many reviewers of novels, for instance, seem to know how much of a particular story has to be told in order to provide a solid basis for the impression they intend to convey? And if it is decided that some part of the story must be told, how many know, as a story-teller must, whether the incidents are striking enough to come first or must be introduced with some comment which creates the interest? Yet a first-rate review, despite its miniature scale, raises precisely the same problems as long narratives or expositions raise, and each must be solved as artfully if the review is to have such beauty of form as it is capable of. Doubtless the finest reviewer can hardly hope to have his art fully appreciated by the public. But there is every reason why he should respect it himself.

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BOOKS

Our Peculiar Institution

THE PRIVATE MANUFACTURE OF ARMAMENTS. By Philip Noel-Baker, M.P. Oxford University Press. $3.75.

THE "wise money" of the world is back in munitions stocks. Happy days are here again for the producers of very ultimate consumer goods. We have even given diplomatic recognition to the belligerent status of our present prosperity, and with it to the possibility of its sudden death. Now comes Mr. Philip Noel-Baker, with ten years of study behind him, to put 560 pages before us to the effect that the private manufacture of arms should be abolished forthwith.

Apparently only the People's Front government in France is following his advice. It is correcting a situation where this peculiar institution has not only grown powerful and arrogant but sufficiently suspect, by reason of its own domestic and international diplomacy, to make a realistic people's government wonder how much of production and how much of sabotage could be expected from it in the course of a war against civil factions or foreign governments devoted to the sanctity of this and other private institutions.

Noel-Baker makes a convincing case on most of the matters usually considered in connection with private manufacture of armaments, and promises a second volume to cover the rest. Formerly professor of international relations in the University of London, fellow at Cambridge, assistant to the president of the Disarmament Conference, 1932-33, he was aided in his study by the Rockefeller Foundation and by James J. Forstall of Chicago. He goes at the subject with calm curiosity, without any attempt to find wicked men lusting for blood, and scrupulously cites the defense of the munitions manufacturers at every turn. Until that day when someone on the inside of the big munitions companies of the world decides that he wants to do something for the peace of the world and tells the full story from the inside, this book is likely to be the most complete work on the subject.

Those who believe that there can be peaceful change in the world will find themselves sharply challenged by his story. Probably no other single institution has been the center of so much fear and so much interference with peace as this one, and yet it survives, hardy and husky. President Wilson tried to abolish it at Versailles, but his attempt was quickly and skilfully diverted. Perhaps the least satisfactory part of this book is the failure to meet the question of the unwillingness of the various governments to abolish private manufacture in the immediate post-war period when everybody was oversupplied with munitions and lean years loomed for the companies.

The author lays the responsibility for private manufacture at the doors of the governments. They encourage the system. Why? Laziness? Social aversion of military men to engaging in trade? The desire of armies and navies to have widespread business support for growing militarisms? The desire of the governments not to let the foreigners get the business? Honest belief that private manufacture is cheaper? High diplomacy, which holds that a foreign army using our material becomes militarily allied to us? Simply interest in more work for local workmen? Mr. Baker does not weight the answers to the major question, but leaves the alliance between governments and private manufacturers standing as a challenge.

The two are tied together and speak almost the same language in defense of themselves and each other. His analysis of the manufacturers almost becomes the analysis of the governments. When the chairman of Vickers says that the prejudice against private manufacture "is the expression of an honorable but perhaps mistaken ideal respecting the sanctity of life and the iniquity of war" he is using less discreet words but not different ideas than governments use.

Noel-Baker points out the paradox of arming potential enemies, a practice which involves increased arming at home —what Admiral Wemyss called a "subterranean conspiracy against peace." England, France, and the United States have all helped arm Hitler. By instances he proves that the munitions firms have been active in fomenting war scares to increase armaments, have bribed and corrupted government officials, have influenced public opinion, have helped destroy peace and disarmament efforts, have, together with self-styled "patriotic" societies, helped guide the thinking of the world to the happy place where people feel certain that big guns and ships and armies are their only protection.

How they go about doing these things is something which can be established only from their own records, and very little is available outside the Senate Munitions Committee hearings in this country. The author credits the British Air League as well as the French munitions interests with an assist in blowing up the Disarmament Conference of 1932-33 and thinks the British air officers were largely responsible for the failure of air-disarmament proposals there. Going back a little he holds that a real Franco-German rapprochement was "prevented by the clamor of the purchased press, by all the propaganda which the armament interests conducted in both countries against the policies of peace." He credits a large share of the failure of the League in the Manchurian affair to the traders in arms. Japanese munitions purchases in France and England and "a frenzied defense of Japanese aggression by the Paris armament press" are cited as cause and effect. The other stories are here, too—of Skoda in Rumania, of Krupp's, of the Poutiloff scandal, the St. Gotthard shipments, Shearer, the Chemical Defense Association, the Mulliner panic, and the others, more or less well known.

Mr. Noel-Baker's book should be required reading for those who believe in international cooperation and are unwilling to help make it possible by cleaning up the one international nuisance they are obviously is a position to do something about.

STEPHEN RAUSHENBUSH

Rugby and the Tragic Muse

THE ASCENT OF F6. By W. H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood. Random House. $1.50.

ACCORDING to the title-page, the authors of "The Ascent of F6" reckon their newest offering a "tragedy in two acts." Its stock of choruses, corpses, and soliloquies is consequently impressive, and there is abundant talk concerning "the destructive element of the will"; yet the play is essentially of a piece with its satirical predecessor, "The Dog Beneath the Skin." It offers, again, polite "revolutionary" farce for the salon rather than the open market, conceived on the principle of the rugby match, wherein a symbol serves the function of a football, in contest of endurance between the actors, the authors, and a handful of selected visitors including Shakespeare, Noel Coward, W. S. Gilbert, and T. S. Eliot.

The symbol, in the present case, is a haunted mountain

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(F6) strategically situated on the boundary between British and Ostnian Sudoland, and presided over by a demon and a legend. At the opening of the play British colonial investors have been apprised of the latter, the general import of which is that the Sudolands shall become the property of the first white man to make a successful ascent of F6. Accordingly, an expedition of five has been deputized to attempt the climb in the name of England and progressive enlightenment, at the same time that a rival party of climbers is dispatched on a similar mission by the Ostnians. The remainder of the play concerns the race to the summit, with satirical flashbacks which lampoon propagandic hypocrisy and the technique by which power and "benevolence" combine to produce an imperialist errand of mercy.

The unpardonable sin of the satirist is perhaps mere silliness, which defeats not only the author but the critic as well; and "The Ascent of F6" is a continuous offender. The most useful comment which suggests itself is that the protagonists, in a moment of stress during which they are rapidly turning into symbols and helping themselves to Eliot's epilogue to "Murder in the Cathedral," are instructed to "behave, in general, like the Marx brothers." Similarly, the performance as a whole is executed in the temper of a comic strip fallen by some odd chance among homilies. Even "tragic" protagonists like Lamp, the botanist, with his chatter of *"Stagnium meningitis," "frustrax abominum,"* and other "rare specimens" are cartoons which border upon the infantile. It is less than astonishing under the circumstances that the play should eventually stiffen under its own paltriness and expire in a clutter of allegorical visitations. Auden and Isherwood are not the first of their calling who have omitted to go to school to the playwright before sitting down to their poetic tragedy; but few have further encumbered themselves with the baggage of a symbol so spurious and noncommittal that it overturns the vehicle it is intended to propel. The final word, perhaps, must be reserved for Walter de la Mare, who in a lecture before the British Academy suggested not long ago that "satire and poetry, the one destructive, the other creative, in intent, are unusually uneasy bedfellows." Certainly "The Ascent of F6" is one of their bad dreams.

BEN BELITT

The "New" Anthropology at Work

COMPETITION AND COOPERATION AMONG PRIMITIVE PEOPLES. Edited by Margaret Mead. McGraw-Hill Book Company. $4.

THIS book is recommended in the highest terms by the reviewer for two large groups of readers: for all professionals in the social sciences, and for non-professional readers who are interested in adding extra dimensions to the flat-surface view of human nature and of culture that most of us are wont to carry about as our equipment for analyzing current problems.

Dr. Mead is something of a storm center in anthropology. The old guard, those whose problems were defined by the safe orthodoxies of this field and also, be it added, those who seek scrupulously never to generalize beyond their data, criticize her penchant for generalizing brilliantly at the fragile edge of her data. On the other hand, there is a widening group of alert workers in her own and in related fields who regard Dr. Mead's as one of the most fertile and stimulating minds at work in the social sciences today.

The present volume is important both for its specific content and for its methodology. Every science tends to become "pot-bound" by its familiar structure of problems and procedures. In the case of anthropology this has tended to mean that, when the rest of us have taken our problems to the monographic studies of the ethnologists in the hope of testing the range of cultural adaptation about the problem in question, we have found that our problems as students of contemporary society are not the problems of ethnology. Perhaps one should not expect the ethnologist to go into the field with any concern to help answer the urgent questions of non-primitive societies.

Dr. Mead asks in the present volume questions that are crucial to an individualistic, competitive culture such as our own: How do whole societies of people get patterned—as does our own—around the competitive pursuit of the carrot of personal "success"? Is this restless competitiveness due, as many assume, to the stark "natur' of the human critter" or to other factors? And to what extent is cooperativeness where it exists merely an enforced expedient, the result, for example, of the crowding pressure of enemies or of the scarcity of basic necessities such as food? Presumably the answers to such questions lie in the close scrutiny of the patterning of personality and culture as regards competition and cooperation over the face of the earth. Dr. Mead has worked through thirteen diverse types of primitive cultures with a group of associates. In more than half the cases existing printed materials have been supplemented by vital additional material from persons familiar at first hand with the culture in question. The end product here presented represents that all too rare bird in the social sciences, a genuinely cooperative piece of analysis which asks fresh, cross-cutting questions of conventional materials.

The conclusions stress the great variability of the personality emphases which different cultures select and stress through their respective institutionalized processes of character formation: "There is no correlation at all between major emphases [upon competition and cooperation] and a classification of cultures into food-gathering, hunting, agricultural, or pastoral peoples." "Whether a group has a minimum or a plentiful subsistence level is not directly relevant to the question of how cooperative or competitive in emphasis a culture will be." Structurally, cooperative societies contain well-defined and integrated closed groups, defining status and giving security to their members; while competitive societies are not closed—status can be lost and must constantly be won and rewon by the individual's own initiative. Cooperative societies do not necessarily involve the muting of the individual ego, for "strong ego development can occur in individualistic, competitive, or cooperative societies." "The social conception of success and the structural framework into which the individual success is fitted are more determinative than the state of technology or the plentifulness of food." "There is a correspondence between: a major emphasis upon competition, a social structure which depends upon the initiative of the individual, a valuation of property for individual ends, a single scale of success, and a strong development of the ego." "There is a correspondence between: a major emphasis upon cooperation, a social structure which does not depend upon individual initiative or the exercise of power over persons, a faith in an ordered universe, weak emphasis upon rising in status, and a high degree of security for the individual."

The introduction and concluding interpretative statement by Dr. Mead contain brilliant, conceptually fresh analysis. Here one sees the new social research grappling with its problems.

ROBERT S. LYND

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Buck Mulligan's Memoirs

AS I WAS GOING DOWN SACKVILLE STREET. By Oliver St. John Gogarty. Reynal and Hitchcock. $3.50.

FOR no clear reason Dr. Gogarty opens his memoirs with an account of an itinerant eccentric named Endymion, one of those "naturals" that abound in the streets of Dublin and are treated by the populace with mingled ridicule and affection. But it soon becomes apparent that this is by way of a preparation for the impression that the celebrated doctor is desirous of building up of himself—a "natural" well supplied with Latin quotations, Rolls Royces, castles in Connemara, and epigrams at the expense of his country. Dr. Gogarty is the professional man become professional "natural"; and so contented does he seem with the role that we cannot but take him at his word. When he protests that he is a figment in the mind of a city gone mad, we are able to make the necessary deductions. Undoubtedly, the city would put the matter in a different way.

In an equivocal preface Francis Hackett ascribes the equivocal character of his friend to the circumstances of his having been christened Oliver St. John. This is a penetrating observation that explains, if it does not quite condone, much in this book. It explains how the doctor had been able to give shelter to Michael Collins, veteran enemy of the British Empire, only a few months before he matched platitudes with the Duke of Connaught in a London drawing-room. It explains how he can contribute so richly to the playboy tradition in almost the same breath that he denounces his countrymen as a race of poltroons. And it explains also that peculiarly opaque and childlike humor which caused Joyce to represent him as the type of the unfeeling man. (While there is nothing here comparable to the remark that Buck Mulligan made to Stephen in the opening episode of "Ulysses," the reader is referred to the story of George Moore's eczema as an instance of the cruelty to which the doctor's fondness for practical jokes can lead him.) The dichotomy that Mr. Hackett finds symbolized in his name is never resolved; it is dissolved in a spattering humor that falls on friend and enemy alike. The Catholic Irishman looks at the Anglo-Irish gentleman with an inveterate distrust of his pretensions; and the alien looks down upon the native with a self-protective scorn. These are the psychological ingredients of a Swift, a Congreve, or a Shaw. But somehow the present brew does not quite attain to the strength of a Wilde.

The best portions of the book are those relating the conversation with Yeats, the meeting between Michael Collins and AE, and the death of Arthur Griffith. These give evidence of powers that have been sacrificed on the altar of professional wit. Dr. Gogarty's politics are those of the merchant and land-owning class, for whom De Valera has become an incarnation of the Inquisition. For this reason many of the passionately expressed opinions will have a tiresome remoteness for the American reader. They are more likely to appeal to the tory section of the English audience, who will also be gratified by what Dr. Gogarty has to say of Austen Chamberlain, Birkenhead, and other ornaments of the Empire. "What do you think of Buck Mulligan?" Mr. Joyce asked Frank Budgen, to whom he had shown one of the later episodes of his work. The latter replied that he was as witty and entertaining as ever. "He should begin to pall on the reader as the day goes on," Mr. Joyce remarked; and it is hardly possible to improve on the description.

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John Donne and Others

JOHN DONNE AND THE NEW PHILOSOPHY. By Charles Monroe Coffin. Columbia University Press. $3.50.

THE METAPHYSICAL POETS. A STUDY IN RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE. By Helen C. White. The Macmillan Company. $3.

THESE two volumes are ample evidence in support of Miss White's own statement that certain English poets of the seventeenth century have ceased to "enjoy the immunities of the remote and happily irrelevant." The nineteenth century rediscovered them and thought them quaint; or, if it thought them more than that, it did not suppose that their peculiar power could be explained. The twentieth century has been explaining them in a fairly systematic fashion; so that now two books can come out of American universities equipped with every known sort of apparatus tending to indicate that the mystery has been measured. For as time has gone on an affinity has been found between the "situations" of Donne, for instance, and any modern poet. In either situation there is the problem for the poet of reconciling the symbols he has inherited from the past with new symbols thrust upon him by the science of his time—the same science in both cases, as it happens, since Bacon and Copernicus and Newton are still in the ascendant despite occasional alarms (or hymns) to the contrary. It was not surprising in 1934 to discover that Basil Willey's excellent book, "The Seventeenth-Century Background," was written under the influence of I. A. Richards's "Science and Poetry." Nor is it surprising to discover that Mr. Coffin is interested in Joseph Wood Krutch's "The Modern Temper," the classic expression for our time of the terror which imagination can experience when the climate of knowledge changes.

How much Mr. Coffin and Miss White have explained, however, remains a question. They know the lives of their poets; they know the astronomy, the physics, they psychology, and the theology of the century; they have the advantage of building upon earlier researches in literary and philosophical history; and yet I cannot escape the impression that a certain step which Mr. Coffin at least would like to take has not been taken and cannot be taken. He proves beyond a doubt that Donne was in immediate contact with "the new philosophy," or as we should say with the new science. And he asserts what can be as little doubted, namely, that Donne was influenced by it. But exactly how is another matter. Miss White, who to be sure treats also of Herbert, Crashaw, Vaughan, and Traherne, and who is especially interested in mystical poetry, begins one of her paragraphs with this sentence: "The metaphysical poetry of Donne is, then, what might reasonably be expected at such a juncture from such a man." Reasonably? Yes, provided the juncture and the man are not variables, and provided we know at any time what to expect from poets. Given the juncture and the man, and assuming that Donne's poetry had never been published, could Miss White predict what it would be like? I doubt it; and so I doubt that either she or Mr. Coffin actually provides us with much in the way of explanation. Mr. Coffin seems always to be preparing to do so; the next chapter promises to clear up questions which the last one has merely raised. But when we get to it we are put off with metaphors. The new philosophy "sharpened the contours" of Donne's thought, or something like that. It has always been known that the sharpness was there. It still is not known, I think, what the whetstone was.

Not that our authors should be accused of pride. They

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advance no claims to omniscience, and both of them write with grace no less than with learning. It is simply that they have demonstrated—and for this we may be grateful—the limits of our knowledge. MARK VAN DOREN

Marshal Ney in America?

MARSHAL NEY: A DUAL LIFE. By LeGette Blythe. Stackpole Sons. $3.50.

THE Ney legend in America is a tantalizing example of what James Joyce once called the leaning of sophists toward apocrypha. For a century the tradition has persisted that Peter Stuart Ney, whilom school teacher of the Carolinas who died in 1846, was in reality Michel Ney, bravest of Napoleon's marshals, supposedly executed after the return of the Bourbons in 1815. It is now over forty years since the Reverend James A. Weston defended this inviting thesis by sifting the gossip and collating the evidence in a conscientious study, "Historic Doubts as to the Execution of Marshal Ney." It is nearly ten years since Dr. J. E. Smoot added further embellishments to the story by publishing a disarming tribute to Southern hospitality and lost causes which he entitled "Marshal Ney Before and After His Execution." Now comes Mr. LeGette Blythe, literary critic on the Charlotte *Observer*, to refurbish the legend in an entertaining biography, "Marshal Ney: A Dual Life."

Satisfactory lives of Ney, the historic Ney, already exist in French and English. The main justification for Mr. Blythe's contribution depends, therefore, on the validity of its central thesis that Michel Ney and P. S. Ney were the same person. Yet Mr. Blythe offers little that is new and nothing that can be considered definitive to prove this thesis. He has drawn his arguments, with due acknowledgment, from the books of Smoot and Weston, and his outline of Ney's military career from A. H. Atteridge's "Marshal Ney, the Bravest of the Brave." His bibliography, which makes no claim to be exhaustive, is restricted almost exclusively to works available in English.

This latter limitation is the more to be regretted because it has led Mr. Blythe to overlook the criticism leveled at the legend by M. René Arnaud in *Les annales politiques et littéraires* for 1935 and 1936. With Gallic tact and Gallic logic M. Arnaud has pointed out that Marshal Ney's death is amply attested by the archival records in Paris; that a hardy soldier who knew no English at forty-seven could not plausibly have written fluent Byronic verses in that language a few years later; and that P. S. Ney's information regarding Napoleon's campaigns, which so astonished his Carolina neighbors, might easily have been derived from books already in print. The corrections which the erudite school teacher scribbled in the margins of several such books, books which are now offered as proof that he was indeed the Duke of Elchingen, convict him of a dozen errors of fact which the Marshal could not reasonably have committed, and his recorded comments on the Spanish and Waterloo campaigns suggest that if he really viewed the fighting it was from the English lines. It is not easy to believe that a Frenchman, and a Prince of the Moskowa, would refer to the battle in which he won his title as Borodino, or that he would write *cinque* for *cinq* and Lewis for Louis. Furthermore, M. Arnaud calls attention to the fact that Michel Ney was born at Sarre Louis in 1769, whereas Peter Stuart Ney, when receiving American citizenship in 1820, affirmed that he was born in Stirlingshire in 1787. It would not be easy for a Frenchmen of fifty-two

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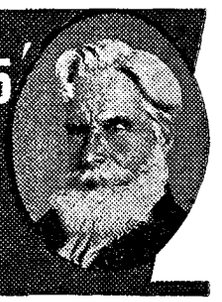

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to pass himself off as an Englishman of thirty-three. Even the coincidence of the unusual name becomes less impressive when it is realized that there were Neys in Great Britain, and for that matter in North Carolina, before the enigmatic Peter Stuart appeared.

There remains, to offset these negative arguments, the troublesome testimony of two handwriting experts, cited by Mr. Blythe, that alleged holographs of Marshal Ney and P. S. Ney were almost certainly written by the same hand. There remains, too, a gravestone in Rowan County, North Carolina, erected to Peter Stuart Ney, a soldier of France who served under Napoleon and died in 1846 at the age of seventy-seven. All evidence considered, there would seem to be little doubt that P. S. Ney allowed his American neighbors to believe, and perhaps came to believe himself, that he was the Marshal. But there would seem to be far less doubt that Michel Ney, Duke of Elchingen and Prince of the Moskowa, died in the Luxembourg Gardens on December 7, 1815, with eleven bullets through his body, while his wife pleaded in vain for an audience with Louis XVIII.

GEOFFREY BRUUN

Shorter Notices

MIDNIGHT ON THE DESERT. By J. B. Priestley. Harper and Brothers. $3.

Men are judged by their success, according to the maxim, but must they also be condemned? Although Mr. Priestley is the author of a jolly and popular novel, he has written more important books before and after "The Good Companions," and he is not only good, he is growing. "The English Comic Characters," for example, though an engaging literary study, suffered from a certain mellifluence of tone. In his "English Journey" Mr. Priestley advanced from smaller human problems to larger ones, but in gathering an astounding quantity of rather melancholy material the author was somewhat overpowered by his own efforts: the volume, though rich and solid, is amorphous. In his latest work, however, Mr. Priestley has succeeded in uniting the more attractive qualities of these earlier studies. Meditating at midnight in the Arizona desert on the fantastic and fecund American scene, on prize fights and politics and the desolation of our hinterland, on cowboys, Harpo Marx, and the strain of being an American woman, on Boulder Dam and our anonymous artists in steel and concrete, he has produced, in the form of a witty, vivid, and highly personalized reverie, a most discerning study of our American culture—it is almost as if, as it were, Virginia Woolf had written a chapter of "Middletown."

MAXWELL GEISMAR

MAJOR NOAH: AMERICAN-JEWISH PIONEER. By Isaac Goldberg. Alfred A. Knopf. $3.

Mordecai Manuel Noah was the most energetic and versatile American Jew of the post-revolutionary epoch. Though he achieved nothing of really first-rate importance, his life (1785-1851) was fastened to the life of his time at so many significant points that his name has provided an indispensable footnote to the historians of our early drama, journalism, and politics. The dual motif of Noah's career, as his biographer demonstrates, was patriotism for Israel and for America. In politics he was a Jeffersonian. Grand Sachem of Tammany Hall at a time when this was a libertarian organization, he held political posts ranging from that of consul at Tunis to sheriff of New York. Dr. Goldberg aptly

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comments that Noah was theatrical in his politics and political in his theatricals; his flag-waving melodramas were extremely popular on the New York and Philadelphia stage, and one of them in particular, "She Would Be a Soldier," survives as a model of our early patriotic drama. As the most influential newspaper editor in New York for a time, he engaged in feuds with two young upstarts, James Gordon Bennett and Horace Greeley. Shrewd, opportunistic, ambitious, he nevertheless had a streak of the visionary in him which is especially reflected in his pioneer attempt to form an American Zion. Dr. Goldberg's biography is compact, firmly documented, and written with his usual freshness of style. He has rescued Noah's interesting personality from the distorted perspective of footnotes. SAMUEL SILLEN

YOU MUST BREAK OUT—SOMETIMES. By T. O. Beachcroft. Harper and Brothers. $2.

England's recent discovery of the proletariat as material for fiction has so far produced only competent writing, an objective but limited approach to characters and situations, and a style refreshingly free of the flourishes and diffidences of the Bloomsbury school. Mr. Beachcroft's volume of short stories dealing with lower-class life is no exception to the rule. He writes a clean, candid prose; he can deal sympathetically with certain emotional states on the part of his characters; he has his facts well in hand, and he presents them intelligently. But the tragedy implicit in these facts, the dilemma of his people and its inevitable relation to a social system at large, never get to the reader's consciousness. In addition, the ideas behind a great many of these stories are distressingly trivial. A young lorry-driver, forced by meager pay to do a bit of poaching on the side, successfully outwits the police. A furniture-maker loses his job and after a dreary period of unemployment lands another in a munitions factory: this situation (the business of the factory is never disclosed until the last sentence) obviously exists for the sole purpose of creating suspense and a surprise ending. The quotation from "The Waste Land" at the beginning of the book—"My people humble people who expect Nothing"—is unfortunate, for it merely serves to remind us how Eliot the royalist, in a few sentences in a highly imaginative work, was able to portray the horror and hopelessness of lower-class English life far better than Mr. Beachcroft has been able to do in a whole volume of short stories which are frankly aimed at such a portrayal. HELEN NEVILLE

THE PERSIAN JOURNEY OF THE REVEREND ASHLEY WISHARD AND HIS SERVANT FATHI. By Elgin Groseclose. The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $2.50.

Mr. Groseclose's novel has something to say, and says it on every page. We have here a machine which turns out two hundred forms of the proposition that the West doesn't know as much about the East as it thinks it does. Mr. Groseclose has invented an American missionary and set him down in Persia with designs against the religion of Islam, which it seems is different from the religion of the New World in that it is less dynamic (this word drops out of a special chute perhaps eighty-seven times); but Ashley Wishard discovers that the daily ways of the Orient are at the worst no ungodlier than ours, and he even advances to the point of suspecting that the essential truth of Christianity is more at home there than here. The reader should make no mistake, however. It is Mr. Groseclose who is speaking rather than Mr. Wishard, and it is his machine out of which the sentiments hop so uniformly

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sized and so squarely packaged. Bearing so obvious a message, and bearing it so many times, the book will either get nowhere or go very, very far. There is never any telling in such cases. M. V. D.

RECORDS

WE ARE told that what has bored us until now has been not Bruckner but his editors. The editors' alterations have been removed; and I am now bored by Bruckner as he is presented in a performance of the Fourth Symphony by the Saxon State Orchestra under Karl Böhm which is said to follow the original manuscript (eight records, $16). For one thing the man lacks the constructive power and the capacity for sustained thinking that are necessary to produce integrated large-scale form. Though a movement of a Haydn or a Mozart symphony is sectional, I feel in it an impulse that gives a single unswerving direction to the succession of details, that makes one follow logically after the other, and that gives them coherence despite their diversity. But with Bruckner there is no connection between details and sections other than the one he imposes arbitrarily of succession in time. The defect appears even in the construction of the single phrase: rarely can he get to the end of it without an awkward modulation. After that a few bald sequences with further awkward modulations, and he has gone as far with this line of thought as he can go; and he drops it and begins another. In the end the movement, as a piece of large-scale construction, is a series of bits of things held together by safety-pins. A movement could be that, and yet be interesting because of its individual ideas; what makes Bruckner impossible for me is the banality of his thinking.

The Adolf Busch Chamber Players' performances of Bach's Brandenburg Concertos on Columbia records were something of a sensation last year; and Victor now offers their performances of Bach's Suite No. 1 in C major and Suite No. 2 in B minor (six records, $9). The playing is again breath-taking, the recording excellent. As for the music, perhaps you have wondered why it was always the Suite No. 2 that was played, and not the others. When you hear these records you will know why. The Suite No. 2 is delightful; the Suite No. 1 is one of the worst examples of the aridity that resulted when Bach's craftsmanship ground out music without the prompting or participation of feeling.

I prefer Stokowski's early set of Franck's Symphony to the one that Victor has just issued (six records, $12). The new one staggers you with its sheer magnificence of sound; but I have mentioned before the amazing excellence of Stokowski's early recordings—the volume, the fidelity of timbre, the unfailing distinctness even where there is poor balance. And the early set of the Franck gives Stokowski's performance before it became afflicted with elephantiasis. For this reason I hope that Victor will continue to list it.

The business of subscription recording has been questionable and confused from the start, and remains so today. Thus, Victor has only now given the first Sibelius Society album a listing in its catalogue, which will make some people aware for the first time that they can have something which has been available for four years. It contains the Fifth Symphony, which I consider one of Sibelius's best and most characteristic works in ideas and construction, the tone-poem "Tapiola," which I consider one of the worst, and the tone-poem "Pohjola's Daughter," which I find enjoyable. The performances by the London Symphony under Kajanus are, I realize now, excellent; it is the recording that lacks clarity and balance occasionally, but not enough to make the set less than good (seven records, $10.50). The accompanying booklet by Ernest Newman offers valuable analyses of the works, and a foreword which deals penetratingly with the Sibelius who is, and fantastically with the Sibelius who is not.

Musicraft has issued two works, each on a single record ($1.50), which I find only mildly charming: Buxtehude's Easter Cantata "O fröhliche Stunden," performed by Ethel Luening, soprano, Joseph Reilich and Ralph Hersh, violins, Sterling Hunkins, 'cello, and Ernst Victor Wolff, harpsichord; and Händel's secular cantata "Nell dolce dell' oblio," performed by Miss Luening, Otto Luening, flute, and Mr. Wolff. Performances and recording are excellent, and surfaces are extraordinarily quiet. On other single records are two works which merely satisfy an interest: a sonata by Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, and another sonata by Wilhelm Friedemann Bach which I find the most interesting of all these works. They are well played on the piano by Mr. Wolff, and well recorded. Less good in all respects is the record of a string quartet by Johann Christoph Friedrich Bach, played by the Perole Quartet. B. H. HAGGIN

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Letters to the Editors

Hugh Johnson vs. Paul Ward

Dear Sirs: Your letter inclosing advanced proof of Paul Ward's article on me was received a week late. In the meantime, I saw its publication and also another by Mr. Ward in the Baltimore *Sun*.

I don't know why I should make any statement about the almost completely false reporting, by a personal enemy, whom you have permitted to use your columns in attempted character assassination by a bunch of assertions of which almost the only completely true one is that I was employed by R. C. A.—which everybody knew at the time—and that I received $40,000 fee.

Such statements as that I assumed the role of *amicus curiae* until Chairman Madden put a blunt question is completely refuted by the fact that my name was signed as counsel to all important documents in the case.

This is merely one example of repeated false reporting throughout the document.

If anybody on the side of labor has occasion to be dissatisfied about my conduct of the case, it should be Mr. John L. Lewis. He has expressed himself to the contrary and when he heard of this attack voluntarily offered to go before the La Follette committee and straighten the record. I begged him not to do so because there is nothing there that needs straightening so far as I am concerned—except in Mr. Ward's scurrilous perversion of the record—and that is too insignificant and obscure to merit any attention from either Mr. Lewis or myself.

HUGH S. JOHNSON

Washington, March 25

Dear Sirs: The General completely evades the issue. Does he deny that while he served as labor counsel to R. C. A., the company employed virtually every known form of union-busting and strike-breaking? Does he deny that it employed as guards approximately 300 thugs supplied by a notorious strike-breaking agency whose head still is dodging the La Follette committee's subpoenas? Does he deny that it took on as permanent additions to its labor-relations department while he still was labor counsel one Manning "noble" and five or six Manning "finks"? Does he deny that in argument before the NLRB he took cognizance of the terroristic campaign of the company's union to force a boycott of the collective-bargaining election which was part of the peace pact he had engineered and that he defended that campaign at least to the point of arguing that it had no bearing upon how the board should rule? Does he deny that he pestered an individual board member, John M. Carmody, at his home and at his office, trying to induce him to give the R. C. A. a "break" such had been denied other companies? And does he deny that he publicly advised R. C. A. to defy the NLRB when the "break" he sought was not forthcoming and that the company followed and still follows his advice?

Of course he doesn't deny these things for they are all matters of public record. The General says I distort that record, but he takes great care not to present a bill of particulars. I challenge him to do so, knowing full well that he cannot, for the record is clear beyond possibility of distortion.

What the General does, instead, is to present a sort of character testimony in his defense. First, he calls me "a personal enemy." I don't mind being so regarded by the General, but for the record I should like to say that I have always been fond of the General as a person—his is a magnetic and likable old carcass—but I have never been able to respect his intellect. He is the most unstable and undependable figure to occupy an important role in American public life in recent years.

Secondly, the General calls upon John L. Lewis to testify in his behalf. Frankly, I do not believe what he says of Lewis's willingness to defend him before the La Follette committee and will not believe it until I hear it from Lewis himself. As Lewis is far from Washington at the moment and engaged in much more important affairs than this matter, I cannot satisfy myself on this point at present.

There is only one other point in the General's letter that deserves notice. He denies—by indirection—that he bespoke for himself the role of *amicus curiae* when he stepped up to argue before the NLRB. As my piece noted, the fact is not recorded in the record but members of the board recall the episode clearly. It is Johnson's word against theirs, and I'll take theirs, especially since the transcript does record his arguing that he was called into the case by "both sides" and as an "impartial arbiter." It is perhaps needless to add that impartial arbiters draw their pay, if any at all, from both sides.

PAUL W. WARD

Washington, March 31

Puerto Rico Harvest

Dear Sirs: I was amazed to read in *The Nation* the following declaration: "It is significant that the strength of popular feeling against the United States should have increased rather than diminished under the supposed beneficence of New Deal administration." This statement was made in connection with the deplorable slaughter in Ponce, Puerto Rico, when eighteen persons were wounded, ten of them fatally.

One would infer from such a statement that the people of Puerto Rico are ungrateful to the United States government for the benefits received under the New Deal; in reality, nothing could be farther from the truth. The great majority of the people of Puerto Rico have been extremely grateful and loyal to the New Deal. Occurrences like the Ponce incident happened in the years before the New Deal, the difference being that the police used to be blissfully blind and deaf to the Nationalists' threats against others.

The people of Puerto Rico are now harvesting a crop from seeds of violent propaganda which have been permitted to germinate and spread over a period of at least ten years.

SANTIAGO IGLESIAS

Washington, March 29

Malraux Was Worth It

Dear Sirs: I have just renewed my subscription to *The Nation* for one year. Now, five dollars means much to a teacher—even to a teacher in the sit-down region of Michigan. I have also just finished reading Forging Man's Fate in Spain, by André Malraux, in your issue of March 20. I consider that I have already had my money's worth. The story was splendid.

HENRY F. BETZING

Dearborn, Mich., April 2

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The Jefferson Memorial

Dear Sirs: I want to register an emphatic protest against the construction of the proposed Jefferson Memorial in Potomac Park, Washington, D. C., for the following reasons:

1. The building is completely inappropiate in that (a) it is an "adaptation" of a second-rate imperial Roman building—the so-called Pantheon; (b) it in no way reflects the character, life, or accomplishment of Jefferson, who abhorred everything imperial and whose University of Virginia is one of the most beautiful and deeply felt creations in the country; (c) it will make America ridiculous in the eyes of other nations, where architecture is a serious contemporary art, not an exercise in archaeology; (d) it will mar the beauty of the Tidal Basin and its cherry trees.

2. The basis for the selection of the architect is unknown. The building was awarded without competition, an incredible and high-handed procedure for a public monument of such importance.

3. The building will be a useless structure and, if published reports of foundation conditions are true, will cost for foundations alone almost as much as the present appropriation of $3,000,000. A memorial to Jefferson should be something for use and enjoyment by the people; it should be democratic architecture of today, not imperial pomp.

Why not substitute a planetarium?

JOSIAH P. MARVEL
HENRY S. CHURCHILL

New York, April 3

[Similar protests against the Jefferson Memorial have been made by the Designers of Shelter in America, the American Sculptors' Society, and the staff of the School of Architecture of Columbia University.—EDITORS THE NATION.]

Tune in on Madrid

Dear Sirs: The following data on a series of broadcasts in English from the new Madrid station (EAQ No. 2—31.65 meters) were obtained from announcements made during their transmission this evening. As the station can be heard with exceptional clarity you may wish to pass this information along to your readers.

A group of English-speaking correspondents now in Madrid will be heard Tuesdays and Fridays at 9 p. m., eastern standard time, and Mondays at 8 p. m., reporting their experiences and events of interest in the Spanish War.

New York, March 29 J. MAGUIRE

Help Southern Labor!

Dear Sirs: American liberals may well be proud of their aid to the cause of the people of Spain, which is of course the cause of anti-fascists everywhere. However, fascist tendencies in our own South remain undefeated, and we must carry on the fight for democracy there.

Recent news from Washington indicates that party politics will prevent any attempt by Congress at solving the problems of the South. Even the woefully inadequate Tenant Farmer and Share-Cropper bill was thrown out of committee as "socialistic."

The only hope for an improvement of conditions which Secretary Wallace describes as worse than those which exist "among any peasantry of Europe" is in Southern labor and liberal forces. Two schools, Highlander Folk School at Monteagle, Tennessee, and Commonwealth College at Mena, Arkansas, have been fighting heroically against the intolerable Southern conditions. Faculties of both schools work without compensation. In addition to their resident work at the colleges, the faculties also conduct extension work in labor centers of the South. Both teachers and students help organize strikes when needed and serve on the picket lines, thus combining front-line experience with study.

These two schools form centers of liberalizing thought in this most difficult section of our country. We believe readers of *The Nation* will realize this and will help to make it possible for them to carry on. The address of the Committee for Southern Resident Labor Colleges is 18 East Forty-eighth Street, New York.

IRENE THOMAS
New York, April 5 Executive Secretary

CONTRIBUTORS

THOMAS MANN is now in New York and will deliver a series of lectures at the New School. A letter clarifying his attitude toward the Hitler regime appeared in *The Nation* for March 6.

RUTH BRINDZE has just published a new book, "Not to Be Broadcast. The Truth About the Radio."

MILTON S. MAYER is a free-lance journalist. Another of his articles, Chicago Goes Broke, appeared in our issue of February 13.

WILLIAM SEAGLE is the author of "There Ought to Be a Law" and is at present working on a new book tracing the history of the law for the layman.

STEPHEN RAUSHENBUSH was in charge of preparing the material for the Senate Munitions Investigating Committee and acted as counsel for the committee during the hearings.

ROBERT S. LYND is coauthor with Helen Merrell Lynd of "Middletown in Transition."

WILLIAM TROY, formerly film critic for *The Nation,* is now a member of the English Department of Bennington College.

GEOFFREY BRUUN is on the faculty of New York University.

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